A BLESSED BOND

Marriage Is One of Allaah’s Laws

Allaah (﷾) created our world and the laws that govern it. Among Allaah’s laws is that we need food to survive, air to breathe, rain for vegetation, and so on. One of Allaah's important laws is that things are created in pairs; and from these pairs, reproduction occurs. Allaah (﷾) says:

وَمِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

“We have created all things in pairs, that perhaps you may remember.”[1]

This applies to human beings who are made of male – female pairs as well. Humankind started with our father, Aadam, and our mother, Hawwa’ (Eve). From that pair, Allaah (﷾) created all of the other people, as He (﷾) says:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا
وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَآءً ۚ

“O people! Revere your Lord who has created you from a single soul, created from it its mate, and dispersed from both of them many men and women.”[2]

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[1] *Soorah Ath – Thaariyaat* 51:49.
[2] *Soorah An – Nisaa’* 4:1.

Islaam Urges The Muslims To Marry

DEFINITION

The word commonly used in Islaamic texts for marriage is *nikaah*. In the original Arabic language, it means “intercourse”. But it was then applied to the marriage agreement because it is a means to intercourse.[3]

A COMMAND FROM ALLAAH AND HIS MESSENGER

Allaah (سبحانه وتعالى) commands the believers to marry and help those under their charge to marry as well. He says:

وَأَنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْأَيَـٰمَىٰ مِنكُمْ وَٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَآئِكُمْ ۚ إِن يَكُونُوا۟ فُقَرَآءَ
يُغْنِهِمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٢﴾

“Marry the unmarried among you and the righteous of your male and female slaves. If they should be poor, Allaah will enrich them from His favors. Allaah is Bountiful and Knowing.”[4]

Also, Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ) commanded the young people to marry, and advised those of them who could not afford it to fast as a means of controlling their sexual desire. Ibn Mas’ood (رضي الله عنه) reported, “We were with the Prophet (ﷺ) while we were young and had no wealth whatsoever. So Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يا معشرَ الشبابِ، مَنِ استطاعَ منكمُ الباءةَ فَليَتَزَوج، فإنهُ أغضُ
للبصرِ وأحصنُ للفرجِ، ومن لم يستطع فعليه بالصومِ، فإنه له وِجاء.»

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[3] *Lisan ul – ‘Arab*.
[4] *Soorah An – Nur* 24:32.

"Young men, those among you who can afford marriage should do so, for it helps lower the gaze and guard the private parts (from zina). And those who cannot afford it should fast, for fasting is a repression (of desire) for him."[5]

DANGER OF BACHELORSHIP

A strange phenomenon has recently developed among Muslims, without being confined to one country or nationality – a phenomenon whose consequences can prove to be most devastating to the Muslim community. This phenomenon is the alarming number of unmarried Muslim men and women.

On an individual level, it may appear that bachelorship poses a very insignificant threat to the Islaamic world. However, in Islaam, unlike other religions, matters are weighed in light of their benefits or harms to the community as a whole. So, what is the effect of single unmarried men and women on tl1e community? To find the answer to this question, all one has to do is look at the non-Muslim communities. Every day we are confronted by the perversion and sinful practices that the non-Muslims find acceptable in their societies. This occurs because of their unnatural decision to abstain from marriage.

Marriage Is A Practice Of The Prophet

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) indicated that marriage is part of his *Sunnah*, and that whoever neglects it is not of his true followers. Even though he derived the greatest pleasure and highest satisfaction from the prayer, Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) expressed that he still had the desire for worldly pleasures such as women and perfume. This is only natural for a human messenger. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«حُبِّبَ إليَّ مِن دنياكم النساءُ والطيبُ، وجُعِلتْ قُرَّةُ عيني في الصلاةِ.»

"Of your worldly life, I have been made to desire women and perfume, But the satisfaction of my eye has been made in the salaah."[6]

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[5] *Saheeh Bukhaari*, Volume 7, Book 67, Hadeeth Number 5,066, p. 21; *Saheeh Muslim*, Volume 4, Book 16, Hadeeth Number 3,398, p. 15; *Jaami' at – Tirmithee*, Volume 2, Book 9, Hadeeth Number 1,081, p. 452 – 453; *Sunan Aboo Daawood*, Volume 2, Book 12, Hadeeth Number 2,046, p. 499; *Sunan an – Nasaa'i*, Volume 4, Book 26, Hadeeth Number 3,211, p. 88 – 89; *Sunan ibn Maajah*, Volume 3, Book 9, Hadeeth Number 1,845, p. 57 – 58.

‘Aa’ishah (﵆) reported that Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«النِّكاحُ سُنَّتي، فمنْ لمْ يعملْ بسُنتي فليس مِني. وتزوجوا فإنِّي مكاثرٌ بكمُ الأمم يوم القيامة. ومن كان ذا طَوْلٍ فلينكح، ومن لم يجِد فعليه بالصومِ، فإنِ الصومَ له وِجاء.»

“Marriage is a sunnah (way) of mine; and whoever does not follow my Sunnah is not of my followers. Marry because I will display your outnumbering the other nations on Resurrection Day. Whoever has wealth should marry, and whoever does not should fast, because fasting is a restraint for him.”[7]

NO MONASTICISM IN ISLAAM

Some of the followers of the earlier prophets tried monasticism as a self discipline that could possibly bring them closer to Allaah. However, they were not able to fulfill it as well as they had hoped. The reason is simply that it contradicts human nature, and that is why it is not permitted in Islaam.

‘Aa’ishah (﵆) reported that Khuwaylah, daughter of Hakim Bin Umayyah Bin Harithah Bin a1 – Awqas as – Sulami (from the tribe of Sulam) visited her. Khuwaylah was married to ‘Uthmaan Bin Maz’oon. Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ) saw her and noticed her messy appearance; so he asked ‘Aa’ishah, *“O ‘Aa’ishah! What makes Khuwaylah appear so messy?”* ‘Aa’ishah (﵆) replied, “O Allaah’s Messenger! This woman's husband fasts during the day and prays during the night. So it is as if she does not have a husband, and thus she neglected her appearance.” Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ) then summoned ‘Uthmaan Bin Maz’oon and said to him, *“O ‘Uthmaan! Are you doing that because you dislike my Sunnah?”* He replied, “By Allaah, no, O Allaah’s Messenger! Rather, my whole interest is to follow your Sunnah.” Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ) then said:

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[6] Recorded by Ahmad, an – Nasaa’i, and others. Verified to be authentic by Sheikh al – Albaanee in *Saheeh ul – Jaami’*, Number 3,124.

[7] *Sunan ibn Maajah*, Volume 3, Book 9, Hadeeth Number 1,846, p. 58 – 59. Verified to be authentic by Sheikh al – Albaanee in *as – Saheehah*, Number 2,383.

«فإني أنامُ وأصلي، وأصومُ وأفطِرُ، وأنكحُ النساء. فٱتقِ اللَّهَ يا عثمانُ، فإن لأهلِك عليك حقاً، وإن لضيفِك عليك حقاً، وإن لنفسِك عليك حقاً. فصُم وأفطِر، وصلّ ونم.»

"Verily, I sleep and pray, fast and break fast, and marry women. Thus fear and revere Allaah O 'Uthmaan, because your family has a right upon you, your guests have a right upon you, and your self (body) has a right upon you. So, fast and break fast, and pray and sleep."[8]

In another report by 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ), Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said to him:

«يا عثمانُ، إن الرهبانيةَ لم تُكتَب علينا، أفما لكَ فِيَّ أُسوَة؟ فواللهِ إني أخشاكم للهِ، وأحفظُكم لحدودِهِ.»

"O 'Uthmaan! Monasticism bas not been enjoined upon us. Do you not have an example in me? By Allaah, verily I fear Allaah and safeguard His boundaries more than any of you."[9]

Advantages Of Marriage For Individuals

Being ordained by Allaah the Most Wise and All – Knowing, marriage is sure to have many virtues and advantages. In what follows we list a number of them.

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[8] Recorded by Ahmad and Aboo Daawood. Verified to be authentic by Sheikh al – Albaanee in *Irwaa' ul – Ghaleel*, Number 2,015.

[9] Recorded by Ibn Hibbaan, Ahmad, and at – Tabaraanee in *al – Kabeer*. Verified to be authentic by Sheikh al – Albaanee in *Irwaa' ul – Ghaleel*, Number 2,015.

1. PRESERVATION OF FAITH AND RELIGION

Righteous spouses assist one another in preserving their Deen by offering help, support, and advice that enable them to obey Allaah and abstain from sinning. Anas (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من رزقَهُ اللهُ امرأة صالحة فقد أعانَهُ على شطرِ دينِه، فَليتَّقِ اللهَ في الشطرِ الباقِي.»

"When Allaah grants one a righteous wife, He has helped him (by that) to preserve half of his religion. Let him then fear and revere Allaah in regard to the other half."[10]

2. PRESERVATION OF CHASTITY

Men have a natural desire for women, and vice versa. Satan takes advantage of that to entice men and move their lusts when a woman approaches or moves away from them. He pictures her to them in an attractive and appealing form, which may lead them to various forms of sinning in compliance with their lusts.

Usaamah Bin Zayd (ﷺ) reported that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ما تركت بعدي فتنةً أضرَّ على الرجال من النساء.»

"I have not left after me a trial more harmful to men than women."[11]

3. ENJOYING LOVE, MERCY AND SECURITY

Love and mercy are important sentiments that brighten one's life and give him a feeling of reassurance, security, and happiness. One of Allaah's (ﷻ) great favors is the love and mercy that He instills among the married couple. They dwell into

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[10] Recorded by at – Tabaraanee and al – Haakim. Verified to be *hasan* by Sheikh al – Albaanee in *as – Saheehah*, Number 625.
[11] Recorded by al – Bukhaari, Muslim, and others.

each other, just as one dwells into a house that gives him protection, security, and happiness. Allaah (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم
مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

"And among His signs is that He created for you, from yourselves, spouses that you may dwell (in joy and security) unto them, and He set between yon love and mercy; surely in that are signs for those who reflect."[12]

Furthermore, there is a wonderful feel of closeness between the married couple – similar to the closeness of a garment to a person's body. They provide for each other protection, comfort, and cover. Allaah (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ۗ

"They are a garment for you and you are a garment to them."[13]

4. LAWFUL FULFILLMENT OF DESIRE

One of Allaah's great favors on us is that he provided us with marriage as a lawful channel for venting our desires. Ibn 'Umar and Ibn 'Amr (رضي الله عنهما) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الدُّنيا كُلُّها متاعٌ، وخيرُ متاع الدنيا المرأةُ الصالحةُ.»

"This life is a temporary accommodation, and the best of its accommodations is a righteous wife."[14]

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[12] *Soorah Ar – Rum* 30:21.
[13] *Soorah Al – Baqarah* 2:187.
[14] *Saheeh Muslim*, Volume 4, Book 17, Hadeeth Number 3,649, p. 127; *Sunan an – Nasaa'i*, Volume 4, Book 26, Hadeeth Number 3,234, p. 103; and Ahmad.

Ibn 'Abbaas (ﷺ) reported that a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, "We have an orphan girl under our custody. A poor man and a rich man have both courted her. She prefers the poor man, but we prefer the rich man. (What should we do?)" The Prophet (ﷺ) responded:

«لم يُرَ للمُتَحَابَّيْنِ مِثلُ النكاحِ.»

"For those who like each other, nothing has proven as good as marriage."[15]

5. PLEASURABLE WAY OF INCREASING GOOD DEEDS

Not only is marriage a lawful means of fulfilling a person's desire, but is also a means of increasing one's balance of good deeds.

Aboo Tharr (ﷺ) reported that some of the companions of Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) complained to him. "O Allaah's Messenger! The wealthy people have taken away all of the rewards. They pray as we do and fast as we do, and they give charities from their extra monies." He (ﷺ) replied:

«أوَلَيس قد جعلَ اللهُ لكم ما تصَدَّقون؟ إن بكلِّ تسبيحةٍ صدقةً، وبكل تكبيرةٍ صدقةً، وبكل تهليلة صدقة، وبكل تحميدةٍ صدقة، وأمرٌ بالمعروف صدقةٌ، ونهيٌ عن منكرٍ صدقةٌ. وفي بُضعِ أحدِكم صدقةٌ.»

"But has Allaah not given you that which you may offer as charity? Verily:

- ⇨ *Every tasbeeh (saying "Subhaan Allaah - Exalted is Allaah") is a charity;*
- ⇨ *Every takbeer (saying "Allaahu akbar - Allaah is the Greatest") is a charity;*
- ⇨ *Every tahleel (saying "Laa ilaaha illallaah - There is no true deity except Allaah") is a charity;*
- ⇨ *Every tahmeed (saying "Al – hamdu lillaah – Praise be to Allaah") is a charity;*

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[15] *Sunan ibn Maajah*, Volume 3, Book 9, Hadeeth Number 1,847, p. 59; al – Haakim, 2/160; and al – Bayhaqee, 7/78. Verified to be authentic by Sheikh al – Albaanee in *as – Saheehah*, Number 624.

- ⇨ *Commanding good is a charity;*
- ⇨ *Forbidding the evil is a charity;*
- ⇨ *And having intercourse (with your wife) is a charity."*

The companions asked, "O Allaah's Messenger, does a person even receive a reward for fulfilling his desire?" He (ﷺ) responded:

«أرأيتُم لو وضعَها في حرامٍ، أكان عليه فيها وِزرٌ؟»

"Assume that he directed it toward a prohibition (zina), would that not result in a burden for him?"

They replied, "Yes, indeed." He (ﷺ) deduced:

«فكذلِكَ إذا وَضَعَها في الحلالِ كانَ له فيها أجرٌ.»

"Therefore, if he directs it toward that which is permissible (his wife), he gets a reward for it."

Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) then mentioned a number of other things that constitute charities, and concluded by saying:

«ويُجزِئُ مِن هذا كلِّه ركعتا الضحى.»

"And all of that may be covered by two rak'aat that one would pray in the mid-morning."[16]

6. LIVING A HARMONIOUS LIFE

Marriage allows a person to live in harmony with his human nature, and eliminates from him feelings of conflict and dejection. As indicated earlier, abstaining from marriage is an unnatural act that has been prohibited by the Prophet (ﷺ).

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[16] Recorded by Muslim, Ahmad, and others.

Social Advantages Of Marriage

From the above discussion, we can conclude that marriage has many advantages to the society as a whole. In what follows we list a number of them.

1. PRESERVING HUMANKIND

Marriage fulfills Allaah's law for the reproduction, as we have discussed earlier. Thus it constitutes a correct means of preserving humankind until Allaah inherits the Earth and all what is on it.

2. PRESERVING KINSHIP TIES

Contrary to *zinaa*, marriage preserves and reveres the kinship ties. It establishes the paternal relationships between the children and their parents, giving them all a feeling of dignity and self esteem. That strengthens the feelings of love and care within the society.

3. SAFEGUARDING THE SOCIETY FROM MORAL DEGENERACY

Marriage is the proper way to establishing correct and permissible relationships between men and women. This helps maintain chastity, and protects the Muslim individuals from slipping into the filth of *zinaa* and other sins related to it (which will be fully discussed in a subsequent chapter). Thus, marriage closes the door in the face of many acts of moral degeneracy and decadence, which are among the major causes for the destruction of societies.

4. SAFEGUARDING THE SOCIETY FROM PHYSICAL DISEASES

Together with *zinaa* and its related vices comes a host of destructive diseases. Among those are: gonorrhea, syphilis, venereal ulcers, and, most recently, AIDS. Marriage is an important means of protecting the society from these and many other diseases that can be easily transmitted, and that do not even spare children.

5. ESTABLISHING THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

Marriage is a necessary step toward establishing a healthy environment for nurturing and rearing children. Our children are the fruits of our generation and the future men and women of our Ummah. Through good marriages, we furnish them with the love, mercy, compassion, and guidance that they need for proper growth and development.

6. INCREASING THE NUMBER OF MUSLIMS

In Islaam, what counts is not quantity alone, but quantity together with quality. Therefore, we are urged to increase the number of GOOD Muslims – not superficial Muslims. Good Muslims are those who live by Allaah's (﷾) commands and follow His Messenger's (ﷺ) guidance. Such are the people who should increase and multiply so as to establish Allaah's religion in this life and enter His gardens in the next.

A Muslim should marry with the intention of increasing the number of righteous Muslims. Subsequently, he should strive to raise his family upon to the true religion. Only then, would they be among the numbers of Muslims who will please and delight Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) on Judgment Day to the extent that he will boast about them in front of the multitudes of nations who will be present.

Aboo Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«انكِحوا فإني مكاثرٌ بكم.»

"Marry, because I will exhibit your large numbers (on Judgment Day)."[17]

Aboo Umamah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«تَزوجوا فإني مُكاثر بكمُ الأممَ، ولا تكونوا كرَهبانِية النصَارَى.»

"Marry so that (on Judgment Day) I will be delighted by your outnumbering other nations. Do not practice monasticism like the Christians."[18]

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[17] *Sunan ibn Maajah*, Volume 3, Book 9, Hadeeth Number 1,863, p. 69. Verified to be authentic by Sheikh al – Albaanee in *Saheeh ul – Jaami'*, Number 1,514.

[18] Recorded by al – Bayhaqee and others. Verified to be authentic by Sheikh al – Albaanee in *Saheeh ul – Jaami'*, Number 2,941 & *as – Saheehah*, Number 1,782.

SPOUSE SELECTION

In the previous chapter, we established the great significance of marriage. With that in mind, a Muslim is urged to seek a partner that would help him (or her) attain the desired fruits of marriage in a most fulfilling way. This makes the task of selecting a spouse most crucial.

1. RIGHTEOUSNESS

The first and foremost vital quality for a wife is righteousness. The Prophet (ﷺ) urged the men to seek a woman of faith and piety, and indicated that a man attains happiness through marrying her.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«تُنكح المرأة لأربَع، لمالِها ولحسَبِها ولجمالِها ولدينِها، فاظفر بذاتِ الدين، تربَت يَداكَ.»

"A woman is sought in marriage for four reasons: wealth, social status, beauty, and din (piety), So seek the one with din - may you then be successful[1].[2]

Thawban (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Allah (ﷻ) revealed the warning in regard to those who treasure gold and silver[3], the sahabah (رضي الله عنهم) wondered, "What kind of wealth should we then keep?" And 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said, "I will find the answer to this." He rode his camel fast until he caught up with Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), and he (Thawban) was right behind him. He asked, "O Allah's Messenger! What kind of wealth should we keep?" He (ﷺ) replied:

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[1] Literally, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, ***"May your hands be filled with dust."*** This expression was common during the Prophet's (ﷺ) time, and it was not meant literally. It is an exclamation phrase reflecting encouragement or applause.

[2] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others

[3] At-Tawbah 9:34-35

«ليتَّخِذْ أحَدُكم قلباً شاكراً، ولِساناً ذاكراً،
وزوجَةً مؤمنَةً تُعينُهُ على أمر الآخِرةِ.»

“Let each of you keep a heart grateful (to Allah), a tongue constantly extolling (Allah), and a believing wife who would assist him in regard to the affairs of the hereafter.”[4]

1. A THE WIFE BRINGS HAPPINESS OR MISERY

In this life, a righteous wife is a main source of happiness, whereas an evil wife is a major cause of misery. Sa'd Bin Abi Waqqas (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أربعٌ مِن السعادَةِ، وأربعٌ مِن الشقاءِ. فمِن السعادةِ: المرأةُ الصالحةُ، تراها فتُعجِبُك، وتغيبُ عنها فتَأمَنُها على نفسِها ومالِكَ؛ والدابّةُ تكون وَطيئةً، فتُلحِقُكَ بأصحابِكَ؛ والدارُ تكونُ واسِعَةً كثيرةَ المرافِقِ؛ والجارُ الصالحُ. ومِنَ الشقاءِ: المرأةُ تراها فتَسوؤُكَ، وتحمِلُ لسانَها عَليكَ، وإن غِبتَ عنها لم تأمَنْها على نَفسِها ومالِكَ؛ والدابّةُ تكونُ قَطوفاً، فإن ضَربتَها أتعبَتك، وإن تَركتَها لم تُلحِقْكَ بأصحابِك؛ والدارُ تكون ضيقةً قليلةَ المرافِقِ؛ والجارُ السوءُ.»

“There are four sources of happiness and four sources of misery. Among the sources of happiness are:

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[4] Recorded by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 2176)

1. **A good wife who pleases you when you look at her; and when you are away from her, you trust her in regard to herself and your property.**

2. **An easy ride that enables you to catch up with your companions.**

3. **A house that is spacious and of many facilities.**

4. **A good neighbor.**

And among the sources of misery are:

1. **An evil wife who dismays you when you look at her, who uses her tongue against you, and who, when you are away from her, you would not trust her in regard to herself or your property.**

2. **A stubborn ride that if you whip it would tire you, and if you leave it alone you would not be able to catch up with your companions.**

3. **A tight house of limited facilities.**

4. **An evil neighbor."**[5]

2. GOOD CHARACTER

One should seek a wife who is known to be of good character or who has been raised in a good moral atmosphere. A woman of low moral standards should be avoided, even if she has other attractive qualities such as wealth or beauty.

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari' (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[5] Recorded by al-Hakim. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 1047 & Sahih ul-Jami no. 3056). The fourth item in this hadith has been combined from another report recorded by Ibn Hibban, al-Khatib, and others, and verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 282 & Sahih ul-Jami no. 887). A shorter form of this hadith is recorded by at-Tayalisi and verified to be hasan by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 1803 & Sahih ul-Jami no. 3629)

«ثلاثةٌ يدعون الله عزّ وجلّ فلا يُستجاب لهم: رجلٌ كانت تحته امرأةٌ سيئةُ الخُلُق فلم يطلّقها، ورجلٌ كان له على رجلٍ مالٌ فلم يُشْهِدْ عليه، ورجلٌ آتى سفيهاً ماله.»

"There are three individuals that, when they supplicate to Allah (ﷻ), their supplication is not answered: a man who has a wife of bad character but he does not divorce her, a man who lends money to another man without taking witnesses, and a man who gives money to a weak-minded person."[6]

In this hadith, "bad character" pertains mostly to qualities such as looseness and promiscuity, making the woman's conduct dubious and her chastity questionable. A man who keeps such a wife is a dayyuth.

3. VIRGINITY

Virginity is not a condition for marriage, but is a recommended quality - provided that one has both options and that the women he is considering are equal in other respects. Virginity then becomes a weighing factor for a number of reasons that will be outlined in the subsequent sub-sections.

Jabir Bin 'Abdillah (رضي الله عنه) reported that when his father died[7], he left behind nine girls that Jabir had to look after. Soon after that, Jabir married a non-virgin, and when the Prophet (ﷺ) met him he asked him, تزوجت يا جابر؟ **"Have you married, O Jabir?"** He replied, ***"Yes."*** He asked him, بكرا ام ثيبا؟ **"Is she virgin or non-virgin?"** He replied, ***"Non-virgin."*** He (ﷺ) then said:

«فهلاّ بِكراً تُلاعِبُها وتُلاعِبُك، وتُضاحِكها وتُضاحِكُك؟»

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[6] Recorded by al-Hakim, Abu Nu'aym, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3075 & as-Sahihah no. 1805)

[7] Jabir's father, 'Abdullah Bin 'Amr Bin Haram, was martyred in the battle of Uhud. Jabir was then nineteen years old

“Shouldn't you have considered a virgin who plays with you and you with her, and she laughs with you and you with her?”

Jabir replied, "Indeed, my father 'Abdullah died leaving many daughters. I did not want to add to them another young girl like themselves, so I married a grown woman to take care of them and look after them." Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) then said:

«فإنك نِعْمَ ما رأيْتَ، باركَ اللهُ لكَ خَيْراً.»

“Indeed, you have made a good decision. May Allah bless that tremendously for you.”[8]

4. ABILITY TO BEAR CHILDREN

Since one of the important purposes of marriage is reproduction, it is recommended to marry a younger woman who would normally be more likely to bear many children. In turn, this is more likely to apply to virgins than non-virgins.

Ma'qil Bin Yasar (ﷺ) reported that a man came to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and said, "I have encountered a woman of honor and beauty, but she cannot bear children. Should I marry her?" He said, *“No!”* After asking him two more times, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«تزوجُوا الودودَ الولودَ، فَإني مُكاثر بكم.»

“Marry a woman who is loving and can bear many children, because I will boast of your numbers (on Resurrection Day).”[9]

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[8] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others

[9] Recorded by Abu Dawud and an-Nasai. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2940 & lrwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1784)

5. LOVING ATTITUDE

One should seek to marry a woman who is expected to have a loving and caring attitude toward her husband. This is normally possible to sense from her environment and family's reputation. The above hadith of Ma'qil Bin Yasar (رضي الله عنه) alludes to this. Similarly, Abu Uthaynah as-Sadafi (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خيرُ نسائكم الولودُ الودودُ، المُواسيةُ المُواتِيةُ، إذا اتَّقَينَ اللهَ. وشَرُّ نِسائِكُم المُتَبَرِّجاتُ المُتَخَيِّلاتُ، وهُنَّ المُنافِقاتُ. لا يدْخُلُ الجَنَّةَ مِنهُنَّ إلاّ مِثلُ الغُرابِ الأعصَمِ.»

"The best of your women are those who are bearers of many children, loving (to their husbands), comforting, and tolerant - provided that they have taqwa of Allah. And the worst of your women are those who display their charms (to other than their husbands), and who walk with arrogance. Such are the hypocrites, and those of them who will enter Jannah are as rare as are the red-beaked and red-legged crows."[10]

6. CONTENTMENT

An important quality to be sought in a wife is contentment. A dissatisfied wife would make her husband miserable and push him to do anything to please her.

It is easier for a virgin than a non-virgin to be content with her husband's financial situation and with what he gives her. Jabir Bin 'Abdillah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

[10] Recorded by al-Bayhaqi (in as-Sunan) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3330 & as-Sahihah no. 1849). The last part of it (about the crow) is also recorded by Ahmad and others from 'Amr Bin al-'As (رضي الله عنه) and verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 1850)

«عليكم بالأبكار، فإنهنّ أنتق أرحاماً، وأعذب أفواهاً، وأقلّ خِبّاً، وأرضى باليسير.»

"Seek (in marriage) virgins, because they have more fertile wombs, sweeter speech, less slyness, and are easily satisfied with little (wealth)."[11]

7. NAIVETY

Naivety, simplicity, and innocence of heart are commendable qualities to be sought in a wife, and are more present in virgins than non-virgins - because of their lesser experience in the ways of life. This is demonstrated in the above hadith of Jabir (ﷺ).

8. BEAUTY

Beauty, wealth, and prestige are all mentioned the earlier hadith of Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) as being secondary qualities that should not be sought at the cost of righteousness.

However, we cannot totally disregard these qualities - especially beauty. Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خير النساء التي تسُره إذا نظر، وتطيعه إذا أمر، ولا تُخَالِفُه في نفسِها ولا مالِها بما يكره.»

"The best of women is that who pleases him (i.e., her husband) when he looks at her, obeys him when he orders, and does not subject her person or money to what he dislikes."[12]

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[11] Recorded by at-Tabarani (in al-Awsat) and ad-Diya' ul-Maqdisi. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 624 and Sahih ul-Jami' no. 4053)

[12] Recorded by Ahmad, an-Nasai, and al-Hakim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3298 & as-Sahihah no. 1838)

A woman's appearance being "pleasing" to her husband applies first to pleasing him when he observes her righteousness and obedience to Allah (ﷻ). But it may also apply to pleasing him with her physical beauty. That is why it has been ordained to look at a woman when courting her, as we will discuss in the next chapter.

9. COMPATIBILITY

A man should seek a wife who is compatible with him, and a woman should seek a husband compatible with her.

Qualities Sought in a Good Husband

DEEN AND GOOD CHARACTER

The Prophet (ﷺ) instructed the guardians of women to marry them to men of good din and character. When a man of known righteousness and good character seeks to marry a woman, he should be seriously considered.

Abu Hurayrah, Ibn 'Umar, and Abu Hatim al-Muzani (رضي الله عنهم) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أتاكم من ترضون دينه وخلقه فزوجوه،
إنْ لا تفعلوا تكن فتنة في الأرض وفساد عريض.»

"If a man comes to you seeking marriage, and you are satisfied with his din and character, marry him - lest a fitnah (harm) and great destruction become rampant on the earth."[13]

IS WEALTH IMPORTANT?

Unfortunately, when looking for a husband, the woman's family or wali first look at his bank account, instead of his iman, taqwa, and 'aqidah (creed).

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[13] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami no. 270 & as-Sahihah no. 1022)

Furthermore, many of today's Muslim women have been affected by un-Islamic ideologies. They do not seek a husband who has taqwa and good character, which would guarantee for them a lasting, loving relationship. Rather, they seek a husband who is affluent, has an prominent position, or holds a higher degree of education - all at the cost of religion, morals, and, eventually, happiness.

While we do not call on Muslims to live in poverty, we emphasize that wealth is a minor factor that should never be compared to deen and manners.

NO COMPARISON

When a woman marries a man with deen and good character, she will not lose out in any respect: if he keeps her, he will do so in a good manner; and if he releases her, he will do so in a good manner. Furthermore, a man with deen and good character will be a blessing for her and her children, and they will all help each other learn and improve in their Deen.

A woman should avoid a man who does not have these attributes - especially if he is negligent of the prayers, drinks alcohol, commits zina, or commits any of the other major sins. Wealth and social status should never be her main criteria in deciding for or against a husband.

COURTING

DEFINITIONS

When a man finds a woman of good attributes for marriage, his next step would be to propose to her or her family. We call this "courting" or "Khitbah"; it is the act of asking for a woman's hand in marriage. Depending on the situation, the interested man may personally approach the woman or her representatives, or may ask some of his relatives or friends to represent him in that.

If a man's proposal is accepted, the woman is considered "engaged" to him. This "engagement" counts as a legally unbinding attachment that precedes the full and binding attachment of the marriage contract.

Even though an approved khitbah is not legally binding upon the two involved parties, it still constitutes a mutual pledge for marriage; and breaking it without a valid reason would be an immoral act of dishonesty.

A valid reason for breaking a khitbah would be for the bride's side to discover a serious problem in the bridegroom of which they were not aware when they gave their approval. Similarly, if the bridegroom discovers a problem in the bride that he did not know when he asked for her hand, he may take that as grounds for breaking the khitbah.The norm is for men to go to the fathers and propose marriage for the daughters.

THE BID'AH OF RECITING AL-FATIHAH

A widely spread practice among Muslims is that, when a man asks for a woman's hand and her family accepts his proposal, they all raise their hands and recite al-Fatihah. This practice is a bid'ah because it has no basis in the Sunnah or the practice of the salaf.

Looking at the Courted Woman

PERMISSION

When a man intends to marry a certain woman, and prior to formally proposing to her, it is permissible for him to look at her and see as much of her as is normally

possible. This would help him make the right decision and be sure that he truly is comfortable with her looks and would like to have her as wife.

Muhammad Bin Maslamah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أُلْقِيَ في قلْبِ امرئٍ خِطْبَةُ امْرأةٍ، فلا بأْسَ أن ينْظرَ إليْها.»

"When it comes into a person's heart to court a woman, it is permissible for him to look at her."[1]

CONDITIONS

It is prohibited for a man to look intently at a woman if he is not her mahram. Looking at a woman for the purpose of marrying her is an obvious exception to this rule and must, therefore, fulfill certain conditions:

1. The difference between a casual look and the look of a man seeking marriage is that the latter is allowed to stare and repeat the look.

2. Looking should be for the purpose of marriage, and not for the purpose of fulfilling a desire or lust.

3. A man may only look at a woman who is available for him to marry, knowing that, should he propose, her family could possibly approve of him.

4. Looking should be without touching or khulwah (privately meeting with her).

5. Looking should be limited to the body parts that a woman is permitted to expose to strangers, namely, her face and hands.

Some scholars permit the man to look at more than the minimum that we specified above. We do not favor this opinion for a number of reasons. Most importantly, it could easily be abused by the sick-hearted, opening for them a wide gate for defaming or lusting after innocent women.

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[1] Recorded by Ibn Majah, Ahmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 98)

If a man finds that looking was not sufficient to give him a satisfactory idea about the woman that he intended to marry, he may appoint a woman from his relatives to look at her closely and tell him more about her.

EXCHANGING PHOTOGRAPHS

With the wide availability of photography nowadays, a frequently asked question is whether it is allowed for the interested couple to exchange photographs. Before answering this question, we need to point out a few important matters:

1. Photographs or pictures of beings with souls are generally prohibited in Islam. They are only allowed in situations of definite maslahah (benefit) for the Muslims, and only when no other permissible means can fulfill the same purpose as they do.

2. Even if a photograph was classified as being permissible in a particular situation, it may not show a prohibited thing, such as a woman without full hijab.

3. When a courter looks at a woman that he wishes to marry, his looking can be controlled by her or her wali, so that it would not invade her privacy or exceed what is permissible. To the contrary, a man can stare at a woman's photograph longer, show it to others who are not supposed to see it, and keep it in his possession even if the courting negotiations do not reach a successful conclusion. This leads to a serious harm for the woman - with her private photographs becoming widely accessible for whoever cares to view them.

For all of the above, exchanging photographs is not permissible except in situations where one of the woman's mahrams would show her photograph to the courter without leaving it in his possession.

IS A WOMAN ALLOWED TO LOOK?

Just as a man is allowed to look at his intended wife, a woman is allowed to look at her intended husband - with the above conditions, and noting that a man's 'awrah extend from his navel to his knees. However, unlike men, a woman's looking should reflect a certain level of modesty and reservation that are characteristic of her femininity.

TALKING AND CORRESPONDENCE

Talking and correspondence are permissible between a man and a woman whom he is seriously considering for marriage. However, this should be done under controlled conditions: in the presence and watch of the woman's wali or his representative, avoiding khulwah, touching, or other prohibitions and limiting it to what is necessary for helping the couple make their decision.

WOES OF INTERNET COURTING

The Internet is one of the newest and most powerful communication tools that were ever conceived by humanity. The average person nowadays spends many hours every week on the Internet: surfing, searching, reading, writing, learning, chatting, buying, and selling, and so on. It is not surprising, then, that many individuals look for spouses in this wonderful land! Men and women "chat", e-mail one another, and even exchange digitized pictures!

However, courting and marrying over the Internet often has negative results. It involves many sinful or questionable practices, among which are the following:

1. Each individual paints about himself or herself an unreal picture that is meant to impress the other side. One describes what he (or she) wishes to be, not what one really is! Being in a private room with a keyboard and a monitor provides a big chance for pretence. Thus, lying and deceit are prevalent in this kind of communication.

2. As we will see in the next chapter, a woman's wali is normally responsible for investigating about a prospective husband's family, friends, manners, finances, etc. With Internet courting, on the other hand, a woman forsakes all of this and makes herself the ultimate judge, allowing her emotions and the courter's cunning to make one of the most important decisions of her lifetime!

3. Digitized pictures are often exchanged. As indicated above, this practice is largely prohibited, especially since digitized pictures can be easily and permanently stored on the computer, and electronically exchanged with other "interested" individuals.

Because of the above and many other reasons, Internet courting is a dangerous practice that should be largely avoided by the righteous Muslims.

Prohibited Courting

COURTING A MARRIED WOMAN

It is prohibited to court a woman who is married. The same is true about a woman whose husband divorced her a non-final divorce (a first or second time) and she is still in her 'iddah (waiting period). The reason for this is that in both cases she is considered under the authority of her husband, and no other man may challenge that authority.

COURTING A WOMAN WHO IS BEING COURTED

When a Muslim man is proposing to a woman, it is not permissible for other Muslims to propose to her. They should wait until her side (she, her family, or her representative) takes a clear position from the proposal: either acceptance or rejection. If that proposal is rejected, others may then approach her for marriage.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يخطِب أحدُكم على خِطبةِ أخيهِ، حتى ينكح أو يترُك.»

"Let not any of you propose to a woman to whom his brother is proposing. (He should wait) until he marries or quits."[2]

OTHER PROHIBITED FORMS

The following forms of courting are also prohibited:

1. A man who has four wives may not court an additional woman - unless he divorces one or more of his wives.

2. A man is not allowed to court a woman whom he is not allowed to simultaneously marry with a current wife, such as her sister or aunt.

3. A woman who is in her 'iddah from a husband's death or a terminal divorce[3] may not be approached with direct proposals before the end of

[2] Recorded by an-Nasai. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1817 & as-Sahihah no. 1030)

her 'iddah. She may only be approached by a subtle hint, such as telling her, “When you finish your 'iddah, a man with just a few children may want to marry you.”

Offering a Woman for Marriage

It is permissible for a man to offer his daughter or the woman under his custody for marriage to those whom he trusts as being worthy of her.

Performing Istikharah and Seeking Advice

DESCRIPTION OF IST1KHARAH

Istikharah means seeking good through putting one's complete trust in Allah (ﷻ). A believer should perform istikharah before starting any important undertaking. Since marriage is one of the most important decisions that a person takes, it is important for both the man and woman to perform istikharah before they give the final word that binds them together.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ISTIKHARAH

a. A misconception concerning istikharah is that it is made when a person is undetermined between two or more alternatives. It is clear from the hadith that it should only be made after he had decided which of the alternative to undertake.

b. Some people think that one of the important requirements of istikharah is to perform it just before going to sleep, and that some dreams should indicate what to do.

c. Other people think that the istikharah puts in the heart an inclination toward the proper choice.

There is no basis for either of these two assumptions, and the Hadith supports neither. In fact, the Hadith indicates that when, as a result of the istikharah, Allah (ﷻ) hinders an affair that a person was about to undertake, that might bring some dislike into his heart, and he therefore asks Allah (ﷻ) to give him contentment.

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[3] This includes a third and final divorce, or marriage termination through khul‘ (upon her request) or faskh (by the judge's decree)

SEEKING ADVICE

In addition to istikharah, it is recommended to consult with some knowledgeable people before making an important decision.

Thus it is recommended for the man and woman (or her wall) to investigate about his or her intended partner, making sure that she or he has the required good attributes.

When a person's advice is sought in regard to individuals that are considered for marriage, business partnership, etc, he should provide truthful and honest advice. This advice should be limited to matters relevant to the affair in question, and should not be exceeded to other areas because that may then count as a prohibited form of backbiting.

TELLING THE TRUTH

As we indicated above, it is important to provide truthful information in regard to the two individuals involved in a khitbah. The information should be limited to matters that are expected to have a bearing on the marriage. Absolute truth is required from the two involved parties: the man seeking to marry and the woman being sought, as well as their representatives, and any other individuals who are asked for advice.

Hiding any problems that one knows about is a sinful act of mistrust in Islam, and could result in numerous future predicaments.

For instance, one is required to indicate any physical problem in the two individuals involved in the khitbah. If either of them has a physical deficiency, such as impotence, venereal diseases, etc., he (or she) should make it known to the other individual before approving the engagements.

As for the one who thus learns about some problems in the other person, he is not allowed to publicize that knowledge or expose those secrets.

Violations in Khitbah

There are many violations that some Muslims have introduced into the process of khitbah. Many of those violations arise from blind imitation of the non-Muslims. In what follows we mention a few of them:

1. PRIVACY & INTIMACY BETWEEN THE ENGAGED COUPLE

After the engagement, and before the marriage contract, the woman's family permit her to go out with the "fiancee", have khulwah with him, and even touch and kiss him.

Some people think of the engagement as a "test-drive" period in which they fully try out their partners to see if they will be able to pursue a long life together. With that, they commit many sins, minor and major, including zina. And interestingly, many of these engagements prove unsuccessful and end up in separation before marriage!

Some families like to extend the engagement period to months or even years, thereby providing more chance for the engaged couple to fall into sinning.

2. ENGAGEMENT PARTY

In many Muslim countries, the khitbah is held publicly in the form of a reception or party in which drinks are served, music is played, and the bridegroom kisses the bride or takes pictures with her. All of that is in great discord with the Sunnah and the Islamic teachings, and should therefore be totally avoided.

Furthermore, a khitbah should stay away from the people's eyes because no legal shariah consequences result from it. If, for any reason, a publicized khitbah is not concluded with actual marriage, serious harm may result from publicizing it, especially in regard to the bride's reputation.

3. ENGAGEMENT RINGS AND JEWELRY

The engaged couple often exchange "engagement" rings, and the bridegroom gives the bride jewelry and gifts at the time of khitbah. This is in violation of Islam, since there is no reason yet for any property or gift exchange to take place - until they are legally bound by the marriage contract. In many cases, this premature act leads to serious disputes if the engagement is broken for any reason.

Furthermore, the “engagement” ring has no basis in Islam. It originates from an old Christian practice that the Muslims should not imitate.

THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT

Introduction

IMPORTANCE OF THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT

The marriage (or nikah) contract is enacted between a man and woman for the purpose of enjoying each other and forming a good family.

The marriage contract is the formal bond that turns two individuals from strangers to husband and wife. As a result of the marriage contract, many rights and obligations become imperative and many fruits are anticipated.

To many people, the marriage contract is the most important contract they execute throughout their lives. Each marriage contract normally carries a lasting effect over a large number of individuals, many of them yet to be born.

Since the marriage contract has such a great and solemn significance, Islam imposes a number of guidelines that it must fulfill. Those guidelines are the subject of discussion in this chapter.

NO JOKING IN MARRIAGE

Marriage is a serious matter and should be dealt with seriously. It is not allowed for a man to marry and then claim that he did not really mean it or that he was joking.

Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ثلاثٌ جِدُّهنَّ جِد وهَزلُهنَّ جِد: النكاحُ، والطلاق، والرجعة.»

"There are three matters that are considered serious in both serious and non-serious talk: marriage, divorce, and returning (a wife who was divorced a non-terminal divorce)."[1]

BASIC ELEMENTS

As is shown in the following chart, the Islamic marriage contract has six conditions, two pillars, one obligation, and one optional element. Dropping a condition or a pillar invalidates the contract. Intentionally dropping the obligation is a sin.

Conditions	**1**	**Bridegroom's eligibility**
	2	**Bride's eligibility**
	3	**Bridegroom's consent**
	4	**Bride's consent or permission**
	5	**Wali's approval**
	6	**Presence of two witnesses**
Pillars	**1**	**The offering (ijab)**
	2	**The acceptance (qabul)**
Obligation	➪	**The dowry**
Optional Element	➪	**Imposed conditions**

These elements are discussed in the following sections.

[1] *Recorded by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, and others.* Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (*Irwa'ul-Ghalil* Number. 1826 & Sahih ul-Jami' Number. 3027).

Bridegroom's Eligibility

To be eligible for marriage, the bridegroom should fulfill the following requirements:

a	Must be a Muslim male
b	Should be chaste
c	Should be sane
d	Should have attained puberty
e	May not be related to the bride by a permanently prohibiting blood, milk or marital relationship (see Module 8)
f	May not be related to the bride by a temporarily prohibiting marital relationship (see Module 8)
g	Must perform the contact willfully and not by compulsion

Bride's Eligibility

To be eligible for marriage, the bride should fulfill the following requirements:

a	Must be a Muslim, Christian, or Jewish female
b	Should be chaste

c	Should be sane
d	May not be married or still in 'iddah from another man
e	May not be related to the groom by a permanently prohibiting blood, milk, or marital relationship (see Module 8)
f	May not be related to the groom by a temporarily prohibiting marital relationship (see Module 8)
g	Must perform the contact willfully and not by compulsion (discussed further in the next section)

The Bride's Permission

RULING

Being one of the two individuals involved in a marriage contract, the bride should have a say in regard to the partner with whom she would be associated in a long-term partnership.

A bride's permission is a required element of the marriage contract. Without this permission, the contract is either null and void, or may be invalidated by the Islamic authorities - based on the bride's request.

We will see below that, depending on the bride's situation, the mode of her permission varies from being fully vocal and assertive to being passive and compliant with her wall's decision.

A VIRGIN BRIDE

A virgin bride (in Arabic: bikr) is a woman who never had intercourse with men. That would normally mean that her virginity hymen is present and intact;

however, this is not an absolute condition because some virgins may lose their hymen in an accident or illness.

A virgin is usually naive and inexperienced in the ways of life and people's cunning. She has no knowledge about men and is unable to evaluate a potential husband. Thus, it is not possible for her to make a clear decision in that regard, and it is left for her wali, who is usually her father, to make the decision on her behalf. Even then, he must consult with her and take her approval before executing the marriage contract.

When a virgin is adorned with the strong fzaya (modesty and shyness) that adorned the early Muslim virgins, she would be extremely reluctant to voice her opinion in regard to a man who seeks to many her. In that case, her passive expression of approval is sufficient

A passive approval is expressed by the bride's remaining silent, nodding her head, or making any other motion to indicate that she does not object to the marriage. On the other hand, if she does object, she must declare that with a clear action or statement.

The bride's passive approval is the minimum required permission. However, it is possible for her to express her approval in a more assertive way, such as saying, "Yes, I would like to marry him."

Ibn 'Abbas (ﷺ) reported:

“A virgin woman came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him that her father gave her in marriage against her will. The Prophet (ﷺ) then gave her the choice (of maintaining or terminating the marriage). ” [2]

A NON-VIRGIN BRIDE

A non-virgin bride (in Arabic: thayyib) is a woman who has had at least one sexual intercourse with men - whether it was in regular marriage or zina.

A thayyib normally has more experience in life and more ability to make a decision in regard to her marriage. Thus, she should be allowed to voice her opinion and make her decision, and her decision must be honored by her wali. This is clearly expressed in the above hadith.

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[2] Recorded by Ibn Majah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih Ibn Majah no. 1520).

Al-Khansa' Bint Khitham al-Ansariyyah (ﷺ) reported that her father gave her in marriage (without her permission). At that time, she was non-virgin. She disliked that marriage and complained to the Prophet (ﷺ) who invalidated the contract. [3]

AN ORPHAN BRIDE

An orphan girl is a virgin who lost her father. Thus, her wali is not her father. In regard to the permission for marriage, she is given more say than a normal virgin.

'Abdullah Bin 'Umar (ﷺ) reported that when 'Uthman Bin Ma'zun (ﷺ) died he left behind a daughter from his wife Khuwaylah Bint Hakim (ﷺ). In his will, 'Uthman (ﷺ) had appointed his brother Qudamah Bin Ma'zun as her guardian. Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) asked for the orphan girl's hand from Qudamah (who was his maternal uncle), and Qudamah agreed to marry her to him. However, al-Mughirah Bin Shu'bah (ﷺ) approached her mother and beguiled her with money. The mother thus leaned toward him, and her daughter followed her mother's inclination and refused to marry Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ). They disputed and went before the Prophet (ﷺ). Qudamah (ﷺ) said:

"O Allah's Messenger! She is my brother's daughter. He appointed me as her guardian, and I gave her in marriage to 'Abdullah Bin 'Umar - forsaking neither righteousness nor compatibility. However, she is only a woman, and she now leans according to her mother's inclination. "

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) responded:

«هي يتيمةٌ، ولا تُنكحُ إلا بإذنِها.»

"She is an orphan, and she may not be married except with her permission."

Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) added:

"Thus, by Allah, she was taken away from me, even after I had taken charge of her (by marriage), and was married to al-Mughirah Bin Shu'bah." [4]

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[3] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Ahmad, and others.

[4] Recorded by Ahmad, ad-Daraqutni, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (lrwa'ul-Ghalzl no. 1835).

A FREED SLAVE WOMAN

If a married couple were both slaves, and the woman is freed first, she would be given the option of staying with her husband or leaving him. If she makes the first choice, she remains married to him and would have no further chance in that regard.

The Woman's Wali

RULING

A woman may not independently give herself in marriage. Her wali (guardian) should represent her in doing that. He should take her consent if she is a virgin. Otherwise, he should follow her instruction.

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (ﷺ), 'Abdullah Bin 'Abbas (ﷺ), Jabir Bin 'Abdillah (ﷺ) and Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا نِكاحَ إلا بِوَلي.»

"A marriage (contract) is not valid without a wali." [5]

Thus, the presence of the wali for the execution of the marriage contract is a condition for its validity.

WHO IS A WOMAN'S WALI'?

Normally, a woman's wali is her father. If, for any reason, her father is unable to be her wali, her wali would then be her next closest mahram (grandfather, son, brother, uncle, etc).

If the woman's close relatives are non-Muslims, they may not be her shar'i guardians.

If the bride does not have a Muslim blood-relative as wali, the Islamic authority, represented by the ruler or judge, would appoint a wali for her. Io many non-Muslim countries, the local imam of a Muslim community carries out the

[5] Recorded by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa'ul-Ghalil no. 1839).

common duties of an Islamic judge, and would therefore be the wali of a woman who has no wali.

A WOMAN MAY NOT APPOINT HER WALI

A common practice in many non-Islamic countries is that a woman, having no Muslim mahram as wali, would appoint her own wali. This is wrong, and she has no right to do so. As we saw above, this is the right of the Islamic judge or imam.

This incorrect practice has caused a number of bad consequences, among which are the following:

1. The appointed wali is often found unworthy of the trust invested in him and incapable of properly serving his principal's interests.

2. Some women take liberty in dealing with the wali. They treat him as an intimate friend or relative, often sharing with him intimate secrets and going into khulwah (complete privacy) with him, which often leads to committing major sins.

3. Some women expect from the wali much more than what is within his capacity. His only duty is representing the woman and serving her best interest in regard to the marriage negotiations and contract. Once that is done, his duty ends and he stops being her wali. Some women, however, think that the wali's position is permanent, and they contact him for every little or big problem in their life. This results in a relationship that is quite intimate and may lead to serious sinning as in (2) above.

MARRIAGE WITHOUT A WALI

From the above, we conclude that the presence of the wali (or his representative) is a required condition for the validity of the marriage contract. Therefore, a marriage that is held without the wall's consent and approval is null and void.

'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أيما امرأةٍ نكحت بغير إذنِ وليها، فنِكاحُها باطِلٌ، فنِكاحُها باطِل، فنِكاحُها باطِل. فإن دَخَلَ بها فلها المهرُ بما استَحَلَ مِن فرجِها. فإنِ اشتَجَروا، فالسُلطانُ وَليُّ مَن لا وَلِيَّ لهُ.»

"Whichever woman marries without her wall's permission, her marriage is void, her marriage is void, her marriage is void. If he (the husband) performs intercourse with her (despite the invalidity of their marriage), the mahr becomes her right because he had access to her private parts. And if they dispute (with the wali about this or other matters), the ruler would then be the wali of the one who does not have a wali. "[6]

A DIFFICULT WALI

A wali is required to represent his principal and serve her best interest. From the above Hadeeth of 'A'ishah (ﷺ), we see that if the wali causes unnecessary harm to his principal or prevents her from doing things that Allah has made permissible for her, she may protest and dispute that before the Islamic authority. In that case, and if her allegations were found true, the Islamic judge may command the wali to change his course of action, transfer his guardianship to another man, or make other decisions as he sees fit in her case.

THE WALI'S RESPONSIBILITY

The wali, whether natural or appointed, holds a major responsibility before Allah (ﷻ) toward his principal. He should represent her and look after her interest in the best possible way. He should make sure that the man who seeks marrying her is suitable for her. His criteria should be what pleases Allah (ﷻ) (as has been outlined in Module 2), and not what brings him better social status, wealth, or other worldly gains.

If it is demonstrated that the wali is not worthy of his responsibility, he loses his walayah (position as being wali) according to the procedure outlined earlier.

[6] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa'ul-Ghalil no. 1840).

The Witnesses

Another condition for the validity of a marriage contract is the presence of at least two trustworthy Muslim male witnesses. ‘A’ishah (ﷺ), 'Imran Bin Hasayn (ﷺ), and Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لا نِكاحَ إلا بوَلِي وَشاهِدَيْ عَدْلٍ.»

“A marriage (contract) is not valid without a wali and two trustworthy witnesses.”[7]

The witnesses should witness and hear all of the contract's details, including the permission given by the bride to the wali.

The Mahr (Dowry)

DEFINITION AND RULING

In Islam, the dowry is a mandatory marriage gift given by the husband to his wife at wedding. In Arabic, it is called mahr or sadaq.

Allah (ﷻ) commands:

وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلنِّسَآءَ صَدُقَـٰتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً

“And give the women (upon marriage) their dowry as a free gift.” [8]

Even though the mahr is an obligation on the husband, there is no proof to make it a condition for the validity of the marriage contract. As we will see below, a marriage contract could possibly be executed without specifying a mahr. However, that should normally be avoided because it may lead to future complications and disputes.

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[7] Recorded by Ahmad, Ibn Hibban, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa'ul-Ghalil no. 1839, 1858, 1860).

[8] An-Nisa 4:4.

WHO TAKES THE MAHR

The mahr is the sole right of the wife and no one may take any of it without her permission - not even her parents.

The mahr is a compensation that the wife takes in return for making herself available to her husband. Thus, Allah (ﷻ) gives her full right to it, even at the time of divorce - if her husband divorces her without any default on her part.

Therefore, it is up to the wife if she wants to keep all of her mahr, give some of it to her parents or other people, or even give some of it back to her husband[9].

KINDS

The dowry can be money, jewelry, clothes, or other material things. It can also be a non-material gift, as we'll see below.

The amount of the dowry should be in accordance with the husband's financial ability and with what is reasonable for the bride in her social status. It is normally determined by agreement between the husband and the bride (or her wali).

In addition to a cash sum of money that is usually specified as the mahr, some cultures require from the husband other financial commitments toward the bride, such as clothes, jewelry, and so on. In the Islamic law, all of that counts as part of the mahr, and it is best to clearly name it in the marriage contract to avoid future disputes.

MODERATENESS IN DOWRIES

Islam does not set an upper limit for the dowry; but it is recommended to make it light and easy on the husband. A burdening mahr could be a bad omen of a miserable and non-compassionate marriage.

In many Muslim countries, the woman's parents request extremely high dowries. That has led many young men to forsake marriage or postpone it for a number of years, which has in turn led to the spread of zina and other sins among the young. Thus, the parents should be considerate and should realize that demanding too

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[9] Note that the way a woman dispenses of any of her property would still be subject to her husband's approval. This is discussed further in the third part of this series, "The Fragile Vessels", by the Author.

much from the husband brings harm to their daughters and the whole Muslim community.

'Uqbah Bin 'Amir (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خيرُ النكاح (أو الصَّداق) أيسرُه.»

"The best of marriages (or dowries) are the easiest."[10]

A dowry that is light upon the husband is a sign of blessing for the bride. 'A'ishah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن مِن يُمنِ المرأةِ تيسيرُ خِطْبتِها، وتيسيرُ صداقِها، وتيسيرُ رحِمِها.»

"Verily, a sign of blessing for a woman is that her engagement, sadaq, and womb (i.e., giving birth), are all made easy."[11]

UNSPECIFIED MAHRS

If the marriage contract is executed without specifying a mahr, that does not forfeit the wife's right to it.

'Uqbah Bin 'Amir (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said to a man, **Do you agree that I marry so-and-so woman to you?** He replied, "Yes." The Prophet (ﷺ) then said to the woman, **Do you agree that I marry you to so and-so man?** She replied, "Yes." So he married them to each other without naming a mahr for the bride or giving her anything. That man was of those who witnessed al-Hudaybiyah Covenant, and he got a share from the battle spoils of Khaybar. When he approached death, he said:

"Indeed, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) gave me so-and-so in marriage but I did not then give her anything. Be my witnesses that I now give her as mahr my share from Khaybar."

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[10] Recorded by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3279, 3300, as-Sahihah no. 1842, & Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1924).

[11] Recorded by Ahmad, al-Hakim, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2235 & Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1928).

So she took that share and sold it for one hundred-thousand.[12]

'Ulqumah (ﷺ) reported that some people came to 'Abdullah Bin Mas'ud (ﷺ) and asked him about a case where one of them married a woman without naming a mahr for her and he died before consummating the marriage. 'Abdullah said, "Since I departed from Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), I have not been asked a harder question. Go ask someone else." They kept trying to get an answer from him for one month, at the end of which they said, "Whom would we ask if we do not ask you, and you are one of the most esteemed of Muhammad's (ﷺ) companions in this land, and we cannot find anyone else?" He said, "I will try to give you my best opinion in her regard. If it is right, that would be from Allah alone Who has no partners. And if it is wrong, that would be from me and from Satan, and Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) would be clear from it." Then he said:

"لها صداقُ نسائِها، لا وكسَ ولا شَطَطَ، وعليها العِدةُ، ولها الميراثُ."

"She should be given a mahr similar to that of other I women of her family (or social status), without increase or reduction, and she should 'accomplish the 'iddah (of four months and ten days), and she should be given her share of the inheritance. "

Some individuals from the tribe of Ashja' were then present, and one of them, called Ma'qil Bin Sinan al-Ashjai, stood and said:

"I testify that your judgment is similar to what Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) judged in regard to a woman of ours called Baru' Bint Washiq."

Since embracing Islam, 'Abdullah Bin Mas'ud was never seen as pleased as he was when he heard this.[13]

From the above reports we conclude that if, at wedding, a woman was not assigned a mahr, or if her mahr was too small compared to her husband's situation and the mahrs that are usually given to other women of her status, that does not forfeit her right to a fair mahr. She may then dispute that with the Islamic authorities.

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[12] Recorded by Abu Dawud, Ibn Hibban, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (lrwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1924).

[13] Recorded by Abu Dawud, an-Nasai, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1939).

Therefore, extreme care should be taken by the woman's wali to make sure that his principal is given a fair mahr at the time of marriage. If she then chooses to give up part or all of it to the husband, she should do that voluntarily and knowingly.

WEAK STORY: "A WOMAN IS RIGHT AND 'UMAR IS WRONG"

It is important to warn against a weak story that is alleged to have taken place between 'Umar and a woman, and even to note that some great scholars, such as Ibn Taymiyyah (ﷺ), have quoted this story without realizing its weakness.

Once 'Umar (ﷺ) gave a speech in which he admonished against excessiveness in dowries and said, "I will not allow any dowry larger than that of the Prophet's (ﷺ) wives and daughters." A woman protested saying:

"O Commander of the Believers! You just forbade the people from being excessive in dowries. Why would you prevent us from receiving something that Allah (ﷻ) gave us? "

She then recited:

وَإِنْ أَرَدتُّمُ ٱسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَءَاتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَىٰهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا۟
مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ۚ أَتَأْخُذُونَهُۥ بُهْتَـٰنًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٢٠﴾

"If you want to substitute one wife for another, and you have given one of them a qintar, do not take back any of it. Would you take it in injustice and manifest sin? " [14]

Upon hearing this, 'Umar said (two or three times), "All people have a better understanding than 'Umar, Indeed, a woman is right and 'Umar is wrong!" Then he went back to the minbar and addressed the people saying:

"Indeed, I had forbidden you from being excessive in the women's dowries. But now I say: let every man do with his wealth as he pleases. " [15]

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[14] An-Nisa 4:20.

After indicating the weakness of this report, al-Albani (ﷺ) said:

"Furthermore, the woman's quotation of this ayah is out of place. The ayah refers to a woman who is divorced without reason. It means, 'If you wish to substitute a new wife for a previous one that you dislike and have no patience to treat with kindness - even though she did not commit any obvious sin, and if you had previously given her a large amount of money whether she had received it all or you had pledged it to her, making it a debt owed by you to her, do not take back any of it. Rather, you should leave it all to its rightful owner. You only wish to substitute her with another woman for the sake of your desire and enjoyment, and not for any shar'i reason that would have permitted your taking some of her money - such as her demanding separation, thereby hurting you by forcing you to divorce her. If she did not do anything like that, how can you take any of her money? "[16]

This story is commonly cited by speakers and writers, trying thereby to prove a variety of points, some being absolutely false. Among the false conclusions are the following:

- ✘ **It is permissible to demand excessive dowries.**
- ✘ **There is nothing wrong with women standing in a masjid and correcting the imam or other speakers.**
- ✘ **Women may give public addresses to a mixed audience.**
- ✘ **No scholar of Islam deserves much respect, because even a common woman may easily expose his mistakes.**
- ✘ **Women should be allowed as members, or even heads, of religious councils, such as shura boards of Islamic centers and organizations.**

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[15] This is a combined report recorded by Abu Ya'la, al-Bayhaqi, and 'Abd ur-Razzaq. It is declared to be extremely weak by al-Albani (lrwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1927 & Raf ul-Malam pp. 33-34).

[16] Commentary on Raf ul-Malam 'an il-A'immat il-A'lam pp. 34-35.

POSTPONED MAHR

It is recommended to give the bride her mahr immediately after execution of the marriage contract.

Yet, it is a very common practice to divide the mahr into two portions, an advanced portion paid at the execution of the marriage contract, and a postponed portion to be paid when divorce or death takes place between the spouses.

Postponing the mahr is, in general, an innovated inconvenience that departs from the normal practice in the Sunnah. It defeats the very purpose of mahr, which is to be a gift given to the bride prior to having any intimacy with her. It also burdens the husband with a large amount of money that he must pledge as a postponed debt to an indefinite term.

GREAT PUNISHMENT FOR TAKING AWAY A WOMAN'S MAHR

A woman's mahr is a serious debt around a man's neck. Thus, it is a major sin to take it away from her without her consent. Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أن أعظمَ الذنوب عند اللهِ رجلٌ تزوج امرأةً، فلما قضى حاجتَه منها طلّقها وذهب بمهرها. ورجلٌ استعمل رجلاً فذهب بأُجرته. وآخرُ يقتل دابةً عبثاً.»

"Indeed, among the greatest sins before Allah is that of a man who marries a woman, and after he fulfills his need with her, he divorces her and takes her mahr; and a man who hires another man but does not give him his pay; and a man who kills an animal without reason. " [17]

This hadith also points to a situation that is common in some of the Western countries. Some Muslim men coming from other countries many Western Muslim women for a slight mahr, enjoy them for a period of time, and often obtain through them citizenship in their countries. Once they have fulfilled their need from them, they divorce them with a clear conscience! thus, they take advantage of their wives and, furthermore, underpay them their mahrs. They should fear

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[17] Recorded by al-Hakim and al-Bayhaqi. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 1567 & as-Sahihah no. 999).

Allah and remember that if they get by with such actions in this life, they will not do the same before Allah (ﷻ) on Judgment Day.

Conditions

PERMISSIBILITY OF SETTING CONDITIONS

At the time of enacting the marriage contract, the two parties may wish to set conditions whose violation would invalidate the contract. This is permissible and acceptable, as long as the conditions do not violate any Islamic principles. The conditions are normally set by the wife's side, because the husband can terminate the marriage by uttering the divorce and needs no conditions to facilitate that for him.

'Uqbah Bin 'Amir al-Juhani (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ أَحَقَّ الشُّرُوطِ أَنْ تُوَفُّوا بِهِ مَا اسْتَحْلَلْتُم بِهِ الفُرُوجَ.»

"Indeed, the conditions that deserve to be fulfilled the most are those which allow you access to the women's private parts (by marriage and intercourse)."[18]

POWER OF THE CONDITIONS

If the conditions are Islamically acceptable, they must be fulfilled, and violating them would be sufficient cause for the wife to terminate the marriage if she so desires.

SUSPENDING A CONDITION

On the other hand, a condition may be waived by the wife, as an act of benevolence or forgiveness. Also, the Islamic judge may suspend a condition if he finds that it violates an Islamic principle.

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[18] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

VOID CONDITIONS

As indicated above, if some of the conditions violate the Islamic teachings, they are automatically considered null and void. '.A'ishah and Ibn 'Abbas (ﷺ) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كل شَرط ليسَ في كِتابِ الله فهوَ باطِل، ولَو كانَ مِائة شَرط.»

"Every condition not according to the Book of Allah is void, even if it be a hundred conditions."[19]

The Contract

THE KHUTBAH

It is recommended for the person conducting the marriage ceremony to start with khutbat ul-Hajah that was reported by Ibn Mas'ud and Jabir (ﷺ). [20]

IJAB AND QABUL

Ijab and qabul (offering and acceptance) are the main and actual pillars of the contract. They signify the mutual agreement and acceptance between the two parties to join in this marriage bond. Ijab and qabul must be stated in clear, well defined words, in one and the same sitting, and in the presence of the witnesses.

The person conducting the ceremony may help the two parties say the following (or something to the same effect):

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[19] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.
[20] This khutbah is fully cited at the beginning of the Prelude of this book.

a. The wali:

«أنكحتُك موكِّلَتي (فلانة)
على شِرعةِ الله (ﷻ) وسُنَّةِ رسولِه (ﷺ)،
وعلى الصِّداقِ والشّروطِ المسماةِ بيننا.»

“I offer you the woman under my custody (so-and-so) according to Allah's (﷾) Law and His Messenger's (ﷺ) Sunnah, and for the mahr and conditions to which we have agreed.”

b. The bridegroom:

«قبلتُ نِكاحَ موكِّلَتِكَ (فلانة)
على شِرعةِ اللّه (ﷻ) وسُنَّةِ رسولِه (ﷺ)،
وعلى الصِّداقِ والشّروطِ المسماةِ بيننا.»

“I accept marrying the woman under your custody (so and-so) according to Allah's (﷾) Law and His Messenger's (ﷺ) Sunnah, and for the mahr and conditions to which we have agreed.”

The ijab and qabul must coincide in content. Any discrepancy between them would invalidate the contract. For example, if the wali says, "I give you so-and-so in marriage for a mahr of one-thousand," and the bridegroom responds by saying, "I accept marrying so-and-so for a mahr of eight hundred," the contract becomes immediately invalid.

WRITING THE CONTRACT

Documenting the marriage contract is not a requirement for the contract's validity. However, it is important to document it for future reference and to preserve the rights of the husband and wife.

A sample marriage contract (or certificate) is included in Appendix A.

OUTCOME OF THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT

Once the marriage contract is executed, all rights and responsibilities for the two spouses, including the wife's advanced mahr, become immediately due. The details of this are covered in the third book of this series. [21]

[21] See "The Fragile Vessels" by the Author.

CELEBRATING THE MARRIAGE

Publicizing the Marriage

A marriage contract marks the beginning of a new relationship between a man and woman who had until recently been strangers. Subsequently, the married couple may be seen together in public and, if the marriage was not publicized, some people might have ill thoughts about them. Because of this, it is important to make the marriage as public as possible - without going into extravagance and excessiveness.

'Abdulla Bin az-Zubayr (﵁) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أعلنوا النِّكاحَ.»

"Announce the marriage." [1]

And as-Sa'ib Bin Yazid (﵁) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أشيدُوا النِّكاحَ وأعلنوهُ.»

"Publicize the marriage and announce it." [2]

Publicizing a marriage is commonly done in the wedding, which includes various acts of celebration, such as singing and rejoicing among the women, and a wedding banquet called the walimah. In this chapter, we discuss acts of marriage celebration that are permitted in Islam, and warn against impermissible acts. However, we postpone the discussion of the walimah to the next module.

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[1] Recorded by Ahmad, Ibn Hibban, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Adab uz-Zifaf p. 183).

[2] Recorded by at-Tabarani (in al-Kabir) and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami no. 1010, 1011 & as-Sahihah no. 1463).

Supplication

It is recommended to invoke blessings and prosperity for the married couple. Aba Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) would say to a newlywed:

«بَارَكَ اللهُ لكَ، وَبارَكَ عَلَيْكَ، وجَمَعَ بَيْنَكُما في خَيْر.»

“Barak Allahu lak, wa-baraka 'alayk, wa-jamaa baynakuma fi khayr - May Allah bless for you (your spouse), make you blessed, and join you two in prosperity.” [3]

'Aqil Bin Abi Talib (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) taught the sahabah (رضي الله عنهم) to say this du'a (for newlywed people):

«بَارَكَ اللهُ لكُمْ، وَبارَكَ عَلَيْكُمْ.»

“Barak Allahu lakum, wa-baraka 'alaykum - May Allah bless for you (your marriage) and make you blessed.”[4]

Singing and Beating the Duff

PROHIBITION OF MUSIC

As a general rule, music is prohibited in Islam. This rule is supported by authentic texts and by the consensus of the early 'ulama' of Islam, including the Four Imams.

Abu Malik al-Ash'ari (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

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[3] Recorded by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Adab uz-Zifaf p. 175).

[4] Recorded by an-Nasai, Ibn Majah, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Adab uz-Zifaf pp. 175-177).

«لَيَكونَنَّ مِن أمّتي أقوامٌ يستحلّون الحِرَ والحريرَ والخمرَ والمعازفَ، ولينزلنَّ أقوامٌ إلى جنبِ عَلَم، يروح عليهم بسارحةٍ لهم، يأتيهم لحاجةٍ فيقولون ارجع إلينا غداً، فيُبيّتُهم اللهُ ويضع العلم، ويمسخُ آخرينَ قردةً وخنازيرَ إلى يوم القيامة.»

"Among my Ummah will be those who will indulge in hir [5], silk [6], alcohol, and musical instruments. Some of those people will camp beside a mountain. A poor shepherd (tending their cattle) will come in the evening with their cattle, and will ask them for some (financial) help, They will say (to avoid helping him), "Come back tomorrow." So Allah will destroy most of them during the night, bringing the mountain down over them, and will transform the rest to apes and pigs until the Day of Resurrection. " [7]

And Anas, 'lmran, and others (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«ليكونَنّ في هَذه الأمةِ خَسْفٌ وقَذْفٌ ومَسْخٌ، وذَلِك إذا شَربوا الخمور، واتخذوا القِيناتِ، وضَربوا بالمعازف.»

"Some people of this Ummah will be punished by earth-collapse, stoning, and metamorphosis. This will happen when they drink khamr, keep female singers, and play on musical instruments. "[8]

[5] Adultery and fornication.
[6] Wearing natural silk is prohibited for men
[7] Recorded by al-Bukhari (Fath ul-Bari no. 5590), Ibn Hibban, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 5466 & as-Sahihah no. 91).
[8] Recorded by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 5467 & as-Sahihah no. 2203).

EXCLUSION OF THE DUFF

One instrument is excluded from the prohibition of musical instruments: the duff, which is similar to a tambourine, but without bells or rings. Its exclusion applies to three situations only:

a	Id celebrations.
b	Weddings - which is discussed below.
c	In fulfilling a vow. This derives from a unique incident during the Prophet's (ﷺ) time that is irrelevant to our present discussion. [9]

Furthermore, all reports in the Sunnah about the duff indicate that only women and children beat it. Thus, today's practice during weddings where men sing, play music, and dance is in discord with the Sunnah. A man should loathe to do such effeminate acts.

Therefore, we conclude:

Instrument that may be used:	The duff
Occasions for using it:	'Ids and weddings
People who may use it:	Women and children

BEATING THE DUFF AND SINGING IN WEDDINGS

Singing accompanied by the beating of duff is an approved practice of celebration FOR WOMEN during a wedding.

[9] We discuss (a) and (c) in our book, "Festivals & Celebrations in Islam".

'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that she prepared a bride for her wedding to a man from the Ansar. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يا عائشَةُ، مَا كانَ مَعَكم لهوٌ، فإنّ الأنصارَ يُعجبُهم اللهوُ؟»

“O 'A'ishah, did you not have some Zahw (singing and dancing)? Indeed, the Ansar like lahw. ”[10]

WHAT TO SING

Singing should be done using simple and innocent wording, avoiding corrupt songs that call to sinning and disobedience. It is important to note that singing in those days was a mere recitation of poetry accompanied by periodic beating of the duff. It did not follow musical notes, nor did it contain lewd words or seductive body-actions.

In another report from ‘A’ishah (رضي الله عنها), the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«فَهَل بَعَثتُم مَعَها جَارِيَةً تَضرِبُ بالدُّفِّ وتُغَنّي؟»

“Shouldn't you have sent with the bride a little girl to beat on the duff and sing?”

'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) asked, "What would she say?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«أَتَيْنَاكُمْ أَتَيْنَاكُمْ   فَحَيُّونَا نُحَيِّيكُمْ
لَوْلا الذَهَبُ الأَحْمَـ   ـرُ مَا حَلَّتْ بَوَادِيكُمْ
لَوْلا الحِنْطَةُ السمْرَا   ءُ مَا سَمِنَت عَذارِيكُمْ»

[10] Recorded by al-Bukhari and others.

“Say, "We came to you, we came to you.

So greet us, and we will greet you.

Had it not been for the red gold,

Your desert-land would not have been inhabited.

And had it not been for the dark grain,

Your virgin girls would not have gained weight." ” [11]

DANCING

We saw above that the Prophet (ﷺ) permitted lahw for women during a wedding. Lahw includes beating the duff and singing, and may also include dancing. This dancing, however, is merely a slight and innocent swaying of the body to the beats of the duff, and is nothing like the lewd or seductive dancing that is often done nowadays in weddings.

Giving Gifts

Giving gifts is a good practice on all occasions. Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«تهادُوا تحابُّوا.»

“Exchange gifts: this will bring love among you.” [12]

Gifts may be given to the married couple, keeping in mind the following considerations:

- They should not be given with extravagance or for show-off.

[11] Recorded by at-Tabarani and others. Verified to be hasan by al-A1bani (lrwa'ulGhalil no. 1995 & Adab uz-Zifaf p.181).

[12] Recorded by Aba Ya'la, al-Bayhaqi and al-Bukhari in al-Adab ul-Mufrad. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Irwli'ul-Ghalil no. 1601).

- They should not be viewed as a mandatory practice associated with the occasion - such as holding a bridal shower in which the attendees are required to bring gifts for the bride.

- The gifts should be permissible in Islam. They should not include statues, musical instruments, or other prohibited items.

With these guidelines, and with careful selection, wedding gifts can be very helpful to the newlywed in building their new home.

Avoiding Sinning During the Wedding Celebration

IMPORTANT WARNING

Sinning and disobedience to Allah (ﷻ) is frequently practiced by Muslims during wedding celebrations. Many of them presume that the wedding is an occasion for abandoning some of the Islamic principles.

In this section, we highlight a few such acts of disobedience, and call upon all Muslims to adamantly avoid them in their weddings, and to avoid weddings that have them.

We especially remind the newlywed and their families that the wedding marks the beginning of a new life for the couple. Therefore, all measures should be taken to embark on it in the best manner: acting in obedience to the Lord (ﷻ) and hoping for His forgiveness and blessing. They should all strive to avoid sinful acts that may deprive them from Allah's blessing and make them liable to His severe punishment.

AVOIDING UN-ISLAMIC APPEARANCE

In dressing up for a wedding, Muslims should take into consideration the following guidelines:

- They should avoid removing the hair that we are commanded to spare: they should avoid plucking their eyebrows, and men should avoid shaving or closely trimming their beard.

- They should avoid copying styles of the non-Muslims and the corrupt - such as hairdos or clothing styles of actresses, singers, dancers, etc.

Women may only wear perfume if they will be in the company of other women or with their own mahrams. Wearing it in the presence of non-mahrams constitutes a great sin. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أيُّما امرأةٌ استعطرت فمَرت عَلى قَوم ليَجِدوا ريحَها فهيَ زانيَة.»

"Any woman who wears perfume and passes by men who would smell her perfume is an adulteress."[13]

- Women should avoid makeup. In addition to being an imitation of the nonbelievers, this harms the skin and demonstrates an alteration to Allah's creation. The same is true about growing the nails and painting them with nail-polish..

It is permissible, however, to use natural kuhl (antimony) as eye liner. This was practiced by the sahabah, and 'Ali (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«عليكم بالإثمِدِ، فإنه مَنبتَةٌ للشعر، مَذهَبةٌ للقذى، مَصفاةٌ للبصرِ.»

"Use antimony: it helps the (eyelash) hair grow, removes eye-impurities, and clears the eyesight." [14]

It is also permissible to use hinna (commonly, women apply it to the hands and feet). hinna is a reddish-orange cosmetic produced from the leaves and stalks of the hinna plant. Salma, a female servant of the Prophet (ﷺ), reported:

"Never did a wound afflict the Prophet (ﷺ) or a thorn prick him but that he put hinna' on it."[15]

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[13] Recorded by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2701 and al-Mishkat no. 1023).

[14] Recorded by at-Tabarani, Abu Nu'aym, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 665).

[15] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 2059 and al-Mishkat no. 4467).

- Muslims should avoid tattooing and body-piercing. These are strongly prohibited in Islam. They are clearly from the dictates of Satan, and have only been popularized by the corrupt people in recent years.

- They should maintain a balance between elegance and moderation - never wearing clothing and adornment that reach the level of excessiveness or extravagance. They should keep in mind that the thousands that they may spend on a one-night's dress or pair of shoes may be desperately needed for saving the lives of starving Muslims in other parts of the world.

- They should avoid wearing clothing and adornment with the intention of boasting and showing-off.

- Their clothes should entirely cover the 'awrah and conceal its shape. The extent of 'awrah is provided in the following table:

Individual in Question	**Extent of the 'Awrah**
Man with men or with women	From navel to knee
Woman with non-mahrams or with non-Muslim women	The whole body, except for the face and hands
Muslim women Woman with mahrams or with Muslim women	The whole body, except for the head, neck, arms, and shins.

Examples of violations to covering the 'awrah: men wearing shorts or tight pants; women exposing to non-mahrams their head or arms, or wearing tight, transparent, or flashy clothes; women exposing to other women their thighs, armpits, or part of their bosom.

- They should avoid wearing clothing that is specific to the opposite sex - such as women wearing masculine styles, or men wearing natural silk, gold jewelry, bracelets, necklaces, neck-chains, etc.

AVOIDING UN-ISLAMIC PRACTICES

Muslims should keep their wedding aloof of many of the un-Islamic practices. In particular:

- They should avoid mingling between women and men who are not their mahrams, because it leads to various sinful acts, such as:

    - Touching, hugging, or shaking hands with each other.
    - Chatting, laughing, or flirting with each other.
    - Exchanging looks and stares with one another.
    - Admitting the bridegroom, sometimes accompanied by other men, into the women's section of the wedding in order to meet his bride and kiss her in front of a large number of women, many of them improperly dressed.

- They should avoid **spending extravagantly** or turning the wedding into an arena for show-off - thereby wasting money on things that are of no benefit for the Muslims, such as:

    - Holding the wedding in an expensive hotel or ballroom where lavish foods are served and many violations to Islam are committed.
    - Distributing to the attendees expensive artifacts filled with sweets, or throwing silver or golden coins for the "lucky" people to catch.
    - The bride wearing a very expensive wedding gown that usually exposes much of her 'awrah.

- They should avoid other sinful acts that are characteristic of **un-Islamic wedding celebration**, such as:

    - Having un-Islamically dressed waitresses provide the service.
    - Playing music, often combined with suggestive singing and lewd dancing.

- Offering alcoholic beverages.
- The newlywed couple wearing wedding rings to indicate their new "married" status - a practice that has absolutely no basis in Islam.

➢ They should avoid **undermining Islamic rites and rituals**, such as:

- Missing a prayer or refraining from praying it in jama'ah.
- Holding the wedding until a late hour, causing attendees to miss the fajr prayer.

AVOIDING TAKING PICTURES

A Muslim should not take a picture or help in taking it unless it fulfills a need that cannot be fulfilled otherwise.

'A'ishah (﵂) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) once saw in her house a curtain with pictures, so his face showed anger and he said:

«إنَّ الذين يَصْنَعون هَذِهِ الصوَرَ يُعَذَّبونَ يَوْمَ القِيامَةِ، ويُقَال لهمْ أحْيوا مَا خَلقْتمْ.»

"Indeed, those who make these pictures will be tortured on the Day of Resurrection and will be told,"Give life to what you have created. "

So she removed the curtain, cut it, and made pillows with it[16].

Ibn Mas'ud reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إنَّ أشدَّ النَّاس عَذاباً يَوْمَ القِيامَةِ المصَوِّرونَ.»

"Indeed, the people who will receive the most severe punishment on the Day of Resurrection are those who make pictures." [17]

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[16] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

Abu Talhah, 'Ali, and others (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن الملائكة لا تدخل بيتاً فيه كلبٌ أو صورة.»

"Indeed, the angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog or a picture. " [18]

These hadiths are applicable to all forms of pictures of living beings that have souls, even if they are fictitious - whether the pictures are two or three-dimensional, and whether they are paintings or photographs.

A common modern practice during wedding celebrations is taking a large number of pictures and video clips of the newlywed couple and their relatives and friends. Those pictures usually show various acts of disobedience to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), such as women exposing their heads and other parts of their bodies and making various poses with men who are not their mahrams. Thus, in addition to taking pictures for which there is no necessity or need, the pictures reflect many instances of sinning and disobedience. They "freeze" the people's sinning for them and others to see and remember for many years to come - which adds to their balance of evil deeds on Judgment Day.

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[17] Recorded by Muslim, Ahmad, and others.
[18] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

THE WALIMAH

Definition and Ruling

The walimah (or wedding feast) is a meal offered by the husband to the friends and family after the consummation of marriage.

The walimah is wujib (obligatory) upon the husband. Buraydah Bin al-Hasib (رضي الله عنه) reported that when 'Ali (رضي الله عنه) married Fatimah, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إنهُ لا بُد للعُرسِ (للعروس) مِن وليمَةٍ.»

“Indeed, a wedding (or a bridegroom) must have a walimah.”

So Sa'd said, "I will bring a ram." And another man said, "I will bring some com."[1]

Regulations and Recommendations

The following additional regulations apply to the walimah:

THE WALIMAH'S TIME

Following the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice, the walimah should normally be held on the wedding night or within the first three days following it.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) once consummated his marriage with one of his wives, so he sent me and I invited some men for food.” [2]

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[1] Recorded by Ahmad and an-Nasai. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2419 & Adab uz-Zifaf pp.144-145).

[2] Recorded by al-Bukhari and al-Bayhaqi.

Anas (ﷺ) also reported:

"When the Prophet (ﷺ) married Safiyyah, her freedom was her mahr. And he held the walimah for three days. " [3]

TYPES OF FOOD

It is recommended to include meat in a walimah, with a minimum of one sheep or goat - if that be affordable. However, meat is not a condition for a walimah.

HELPING WITH THE COST

The walimah is the husband's obligation. However, it is permissible for other Muslims to help him in its cost or preparation. We have seen above that a number of Muslims helped 'Ali in preparing his walimah.

WHOM TO INVITE

A newlywed should invite to the walimah his Muslim relatives, friends, and acquaintances, especially the righteous among them. Abu Sa'id alKhudri (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تُصَاحِبْ إلا مُؤْمِناً وَلا يَأكلْ طعامَك إلا تقي.»

"Do not accompany except a believer, and do not feed your food except to a pious person."

Sinful individuals and non-Muslims should largely be excluded from the invitation - unless there is an important benefit in inviting them, such as exposing them to da'wah, provided that their presence would not influence the attendees in a negative way.

In inviting to a walimah, there should not be a distinction between the poor and rich. Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[3] Recorded by Abu Ya'la. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Adab uz-Zifaf p.146).

«شَرُّ الطعَام طعَامُ الوليمة، يُدْعَى لها الأغْنِياء، ويُمْنَعُهَا المساكين، وَمَنْ لمْ يجبْ الدعوةَ فقدْ عَصَى اللهَ ورسولَه.»

"The worst food is that of a walimah to which the rich are invited but the poor are not. And he who rejects the invitation (to a walimah) has surely disobeyed Allah and His Messenger. "[4]

Manners for the Host

There are certain etiquettes that should be implemented by a host when he invites people to a wedding walimah or any other meal. Some of them have been included in the previous section. In what follows we include some additional important ones.

AVOIDING EXTRAVAGANCE AND SHOW-OFF

Some people like to impress others about their wealth and status by holding extravagant banquets and receptions in expensive hotels, and by offering costly food and services that are often beyond their means and are extremely straining to their resources for a long time to follow.

This is prohibited in Islam. It reflects an imitation of Satan as Allah (ﷻ) says:

وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّ ٱلْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوٓا۟ إِخْوَٰنَ ٱلشَّيَـٰطِينِ ۖ وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ لِرَبِّهِۦ كَفُورًا ﴿٢٧﴾

"Do not waste your wealth senselessly. Those who spend wastefully are the brothers of the devils; and the Devil is ever ungrateful to his Lord. "[5]

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[4] Recorded by Muslim and others from Abu Hurayrah, Ibn 'Abbas, and Ibn 'Umar. Some of the reports in al-Bukhari and Muslim indicate that this is mawquf, being the saying of Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ). But other authentic reports prove that it is stated by the Prophet (ﷺ) (see lrwa'ul-Ghal'il no. 1947 and as-Sahihah no. 1085).

[5] Al-Isra 17:26-27.

And Allah (ﷻ) says:

وَكُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ وَلَا تُسْرِفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

"Eat and drink, but do not be excessive; verily, He does not like the extravagant." [6]

Al-.Mughirah Bin Shu'bah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إنَّ اللهَ كرهَ لكم ثلاثاً، قيلَ وقالَ، وإضاعَةَ المالِ، وكثرةَ السؤالِ.»

"Allah verily hates three qualities for you: gossiping, wasting money, and begging." [7]

AVOIDING IMPERMISSIBLE UTENSILS

One form of extravagance that some people practice in banquets and walimahs is serving food in gold or silver plates or using silverware made of or plated with gold or silver.

Many scholars permit using silver-plated silverware – provided that the silver layer is so thin that it is negligible compared to the overall substance. However, even then, using that kind of silverware is a source of shubhah (doubt), and is better to be avoided.

INVITING MANY PEOPLE

Within what is reasonable, the newlywed should try to bring to the walimlah as many people as is possible. Jabir Bin 'Abdillah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أحبُّ الطعامِ إلى اللهِ ما كثُرت عليهِ الأيدي.»

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[6] Al-A'raf 7:31.

[7] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

“The most beloved food to Allah is that on which many hands gather.”[8]

HONORING THE GUESTS

The guest has a right upon his host: he should be well treated and honored. Honoring the guest is a sign of true belief. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من كان يؤمِنُ باللهِ واليومِ الآخرِ فليُكرِمْ ضيفَه، ومن كان
يؤمِن باللهِ واليومِ الآخرِ فليصِلْ رَحِمَهُ، ومن كان يؤمِن باللهِ
واليومِ الآخرِ فليقُل خيراً أو ليصمُت.»

“He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should honor his guest; he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should be kind to his kin; and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should either say a good thing or remain silent. ” [9]

Manners for the Guests

There are also certain adab that should be exhibited by a guest who is invited to a walimah or other meals. In what follows, we present some of the most important adab.

ANSWERING THE INVITATION IS A RELIGIOUS OBLIGATION

It is an obligation on every person who is invited to a walimah to attend - unless he has a legitimate Islamic excuse.

Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[8] Recorded by Ibn Hibban, al-Bayhaqi, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 171 & as-Sahihah no. 895).

[9] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

«إذا دُعيَ أحَدُكم إلى الوليمة فليأتها، عرساً أو نحوه،
ومَن لم يجب الدعوةَ فقد عَصى اللهَ ورسولَهُ.»

“When one of you is invited to a walimah, he should attend it - if it is a wedding or something like it. And whoever does not answer the invitation, he has surely disobeyed Allah and IDs Messenger. ”[10]

Ibn Hajar concluded from this hadith that answering the invitation is wajib because the one who does not do it is disobedient. [11]

This carries a command. from the Prophet (ﷺ), which again establishes that answering the invitation is a wajib.

With this understanding, one should answer the invitation with iman (believing in its religious value) and ihtisab (seeking Allah's reward for his attendance). If this is sincerely fulfilled, attending a walimah becomes a rewardable act of worship.

LEGITIMATE EXCUSES

A legitimate excuse that justifies not attending a walimah is any reason that would make attending it beyond a person's reasonable ability. Thus, the following could count as legitimate excuses:

1. Being invited to two walimahs in two different places at the same time.

2. Having to undertake an expensive trip to attend the walimah.

3. Having at the same time an important appointment that missing it would result in a serious harm in wealth, health, or well-being. E.g: a school examination, a business deal, etc.

However, even in such cases where a person feels that he is justified in turning down an invitation to a walimah, he should contact the host and present his excuse ahead of time.

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[10] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others. The part specifying the wedding is recorded by Abu Ya’la and verified to be authentic by al-Albani (adab uz-Zifaf p. 154).
[11] Fath ul-Bari.

AVOIDING INVITATIONS THAT INVOLVE DISOBEDIENCE

One should decline the invitation to a walimah that includes acts of disobedience to Allah, such as drinking alcohol, music, mixing between men and women, and so on.

'Ali Bin Abi Talib (رضي الله عنه) reported that he prepared some food and invited the Prophet (ﷺ). When the Prophet (ﷺ) arrived, he saw some pictures and turned to leave. 'Ali said, "O Allah's Messenger, what made you turn back - may my mother and father be your ransom?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«إن في البَيتِ سِتراً فيهِ تَصاوِيرُ، وإن الملائكة لا تَدخلُ بَيتاً فِيهِ تَصاوِيرُ.»

"Indeed, there is a curtain in the house on which there are pictures; and the angels do not enter any house in which there are pictures."[12]

EATING FROM THE FOOD

Even though it is obligatory to respond to the invitation, it is not obligatory to eat from the food. Depending on his situation, the guest may wish to eat or abstain from eating. In the second case, he should present his excuse for not eating in order to avoid offending the host. However, it is better to eat, even a little bit, as is mentioned in the next section.

WHAT FASTING PEOPLE SHOULD DO

A fasting person may remain fasting in a walimah. Instead of eating, he should then supplicate for the host.

However, if one is fasting a voluntary fasting, it is recommended for him to break his fast, especially if he expects his eating to bring joy to the host's heart.

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) reported that he once prepared some food for Allah's Messenger (ﷺ). The Messenger (ﷺ) came with some of his companions. When the food was brought, one man stayed away saying, "I am fasting." Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) then said:

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[12] Recorded by Ibn Majah and Abu Ya'la. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Adab uz-Zifaf p. 161).

«دَعاكُم أخوكُم وتكلفَ لكُم! أفطِر وصُم مكانَه يَوماً إن شِئتَ.»

"Your brother has invited you and toiled for your sake! Break your fast and fast another day instead - if you wish." [13]

This Hadith also indicates that it is not obligatory to make-up a voluntary fasting.

SEEKING PERMISSION TO ENTER

When one goes to a walimah or its like, the host would usually be expecting him and there is not much necessity for seeking permission to enter - especially if it is held in a public place.

However, if the food is served in a private home, one must seek permission to enter. Allah (ﷻ) says:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَدۡخُلُواْ بُيُوتًا غَيۡرَ بُيُوتِكُمۡ حَتَّىٰ تَسۡتَأۡنِسُواْ وَتُسَلِّمُواْ عَلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهَاۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَذَكَّرُونَ ٢٧

"O you who believe! Do not enter houses other than your own until you have asked permission and greeted those in them; that is better for you - that you may remember."[14]

Taking permission is important for a number of reasons, among which are the following:

1. The host should prepare himself for receiving the guests and make sure that their eyes would not fall on any of the women of the house who may be improperly dressed.

2. The host should be given the chance to ascertain that those who seek admission have all been invited. More about this will be discussed in the next sub-section.

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[13] Recorded by al-Bayhaqi, at-Tabarani (in al-Awsat), and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1952 & Adab uz-Zifaf p.159).

[14] An-Nur 24:27.

GREETING WITH SALAM, AND SHAKING HANDS

When a Muslim meets his Muslim brothers, he should greet them with salam. Similarly, when one enters into someone's house for food or some other reason, he should greet the people who are present with salam.

Some people greet each other with non-Islamic greetings, such as, "Good evening," "Hi," and so on. This should be avoided, because Allah gave us a better greeting: the salam. It carries a supplication of peace, and it is the greeting of the angels and the people of Jannah.[15]

Some people are also of the non-Islamic habit of hugging and kissing each other whenever they meet. Hugging should only be reserved to meeting a person after a long absence, such as one who just came back from travel. In other situations, the Muslims should greet each other with salam and shake each others' hands.

PRONOUNCING ALLAH'S NAME OVER THE FOOD

Before starting to eat, we should pronounce Allah's name saying, "Bismi 'llah - with Allah's name (I eat)."

It is important to note here that there is no authentic supplication or thikr to be said before or during eating - except for pronouncing Allah's (ﷻ) name. Other supplications that people commonly say before eating are unauthentic and should be avoided.

AVOIDING CRITICIZING THE FOOD

All halal food is a favor from Allah. We should not criticize it, because that could reflect dissatisfaction and ingratitude toward Allah (ﷻ). Furthermore, that could offend and hurt the host.

MODERATENESS IN EATING

Whether at a walimah, a restaurant, or eating at home, and whether the food is varied and delicious or plain and unappealing, we should never eat excessively. In addition to its harms to the health, overeating causes laziness and averts from remembering Allah and being devoted in worshiping Him. An important quality

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[15] See, for example, ar-Ra'd 13:24.

of a believer is that he does not overeat. Abu Hurayrah, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, and 'Abdullah Bin 'Umar (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن المؤمنَ يأكلُ (ويشرَبُ) في مَعِيٍّ واحدٍ،
والكافِرُ يأكُلُ (ويشرَبُ) في سَبعَةِ أمعاءٍ.»

"Indeed, a believer eats in one intestine (i.e., is satisfied with little food), and a kafir eats in seven intestines (eats too much)." [16]

The Prophet (ﷺ) strongly prohibited gluttony and indicated that much of what the people eat is not necessary for them - rather, harmful! Al-Miqdam Bin Ma'd Yakrib (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ما ملأ آدميٌّ وعاءً شراً من بطنٍ. بحسبِ ابنِ آدمَ أُكْلاتٌ
يُقِمْنَ صُلْبَه، فإن كان لا مَحالةَ، فثُلُثٌ لطعامه، وثلثٌ
لشرابه، وثلثٌ لنَفَسِه.»

"A human being cannot fill a container worse than his stomach. Sufficient for a human being to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his back straight. But if that is not possible, he should reserve one third (of his stomach) for his food, one third for his drink, and one third for his breathing. " [17]

THE BLESSING OF EATING WITH OTHERS

Eating with other people brings Allah's blessings. To the same meaning, 'Umar (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كُلوا جميعاً، ولا تفرَّقُوا، فإن البَرَكةَ مع الجماعَةِ.»

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[16] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

[17] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, A1;m1ad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 2265).

“Eat together and not separately, for blessings come with company.” [18]

SITTING HUMBLY AND EATING FROM AROUND THE SIDES

Arrogance is a sign of ingratitude toward Allah's favors. When eating, one is not supposed to recline or sit in a haughty manner; rather, one should sit humbly and eat with consideration.

Ibn 'Abbas (ؓ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«البركةُ تنزِلُ وسَطَ الطعامِ، فكُلوا من حافَتَيْهِ، ولا تأكلوا من وسَطِهِ.»

“Blessings descend upon the center of the food; so eat from the sides and do not eat from the center.” [19]

AVOIDING WASTING FOOD

Nowadays, we see that many Muslims allow large quantities of food to go to waste, especially during walimahs and other social functions - at the time when many other Muslims suffer from hunger and famines. This is contrary to the teachings of the Sunnah. The Prophet (ﷺ) was keen to retrieve even the small amount of food that stuck to his hand or plate.

PRAISING ALLAH AND SUPPLICATING TO HIM AFTER EATING

After eating, one should express his gratitude to the One Who granted him the food by praising Him,

Mu'ath Bin Anas al-Juhani (ؓ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[18] Recorded by Ibn Majah. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 4500 & as-Sahihah no. 1686).

[19] Recorded by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 198011).

«من أكلَ طعاماً، ثم قالَ: "الحمدُ لله الذي أطعَمَني هذا الطعامَ ورَزَقَنِيهِ مِن غَيرِ حَوْلٍ مِني ولا قُوة،" غُفِرَ له ما تقدمَ مِن ذنْبِهِ.»

"Whoever eats some food and then says, "Al-hamdu li-'llah il-lathi atamani hatha wa-razaqanihi min ghayri hawlin minni wa-la quwwah - All praise is due to Allah who fed me this and provided it for me without any might or power from myself," all his past sins will be forgiven. " [20]

SUPPLICATING FOR THE HOSTS

In addition to praising Allah, one should show gratitude to the people who fed him. This is best done by supplicating for them.

Al-Miqdad Bin al-Aswad (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) would supplicate for those who fed him or gave him something to drink, saying:,

«اللّهم أطعِم مَن أطعَمَني واْسقِ مَن سَقاني.»

"Allahumma atim man atamani, wa-sqi man saqani - O Allah, feed the one who fed me, and give drink to the one who gave me drink."[21]

'Abdullah Bin Busr (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) once stayed as a guest with his father. They put before him some food and he ate. Then they brought some drink, and he drank from it then handed it to the person sitting to his right. As the Prophet (ﷺ) mounted his animal to leave, 'Abdullah's father asked him to supplicate for them, and he (ﷺ) said:

«اللّهم بارك لهم فِيمَا رَزَقتَهم، واْغفِر لهم، واْرحمهُم.»

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[20] Recorded by Ibn Majah, Abu Dawud, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 6086 & Irwa'ul-Ghalil no. 1989).

[21] Recorded by Muslim and others.

"Allahumma barik lahum fima razaqtahum, wa-ghfir lahum, wa-rhamhum - O Allah! Bless for them that which You provided them, forgive them, and have mercy upon them. " [22]

DEPARTURE

If one is invited for a meal, he should not inconvenience the host and his household by coming too early and waiting for the food to be ready. Also, one should not inconvenience the host by staying too long after finishing eating.

At departure, one should give salam as he did when he entered.

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[22] Recorded by Muslim.

CONSUMMATING THE MARRIAGE

Advising the Married Couple

Prior to leaving the newlywed couple to themselves on their wedding night, it is important to give them advice regarding the Islamic guidelines for marital intimacy, rights and obligations between the spouses, and other issues of importance for them. Most of this necessary information is included in this book and its two sequels. [1]

Kindness to the Bride

The husband should be extremely kind to his bride on their first night together, especially if she is a virgin. He should understand that this night marks the beginning of a totally new life for her. This may make her nervous and slow in cooperating with him. So, he should not brutally force himself on to her. If she does not appear to be fully ready on the first night, he should work on easing her emotions while waiting for the ultimate union between them one or more days later as might be necessary.

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was very kind and gentle with 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) on her first night with him. He gave her some milk to drink, allowed her young girlfriends to remain with her for a while, and talked to them jokingly - so as to make her feel at ease.

Asma' Bint Yazid Bin as-Sakan (رضي الله عنها) [2] reported that she adorned 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) for the Prophet (ﷺ) and then invited him in. He came and sat next to her. He was given a large cup of milk. He drank some of it and then gave it to 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) who shyly lowered her head. Asma' scolded her saying, “Do not reject Allah's Messenger's offer.” So she took the cup and drank some, and he then told her, **“Give your friend.”** Asma (رضي الله عنها) said, "O Allah's Messenger! First take it back and drink from it, then give it to me with your hand." He took it, drank from it, and gave it to Asma' who sat down and drank, making sure that her lips were on the spot where the Prophet (ﷺ) drank [3]. Then he pointed to some other women who

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[1] See "Closer Than a Garment" and "The Fragile Vessels" by the Author.

[2] She was Mu‘th Bin Jabal's cousin: one of the Ansar women who gave her covenant to the Prophet (ﷺ) during Bay'at ur-Ridwan

[3] Seeking the blessing from Allah's Messenger's (ﷺ) touch.

were with her and said, **"Give your friends."** They said, "We have no desire for it." He said:

«لا تجمَعْنَ جوعاً وكذِباً.»

"Do not combine hunger with lying." [4]

Praying Two Rakahs Together

It is recommended for the newlywed couple to pray two rak'at in jama'ah, with the groom leading the prayer. This would be a great indication that, from their first night, they meet together on an act of obedience to Allah (ﷻ).

Invoking Allah's Blessing

After praying the two rak'at together, it is recommended for the husband to make supplications and invoke Allah's blessings on himself and his bride.

'Abdullah Bin 'Amr (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أفادَ أحدُكم امرأةً أو خادِماً أو دابّة فليأخُذ بناصِيَتِها، وليُسَمِّ اللهَ، وليدعُ بالبركةِ، وليقُل:"بِسمِ اللهِ، اللّهُمَّ بارك لي فِيها. اللّهُمَّ إني أسألكَ مِن خَيرِها وخَيرِ مَا جَبَلتَها عَليهِ، وأعوذُ بكَ مِن شَرِّها وشَرِّ ماجبَلتَهَا عَليهِ." وإن كانَ بَعيراً فليَأخُذ بذُروَةِ سِنامِهِ.»

"When one of you acquires a wife, a servant, or a riding animal, he should hold her (or it) by the forehead, invoke Allah's blessing, and say:

"Bismillah, allahumma barik li fiha. A1lahumma inni as'a1uka min khayriha wa-khayri ma jabaltaha 'a1ayh - wa-a'athu bika min sharriha wa-sharri ma jabaltaha 'a1ayh – With Allah's name. O Allah, bless her for me.

[4] Recorded by Ahmad. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Adab uz-Zifaf p.92).

O Allah, I ask You to grant me of her / its good, and the good upon which You created her / it; and I ask You to protect me from her / its evil! and any evil upon which You created her / it."

And if it is a camel (that he acquires), he should hold it by the peak of its hump (and say the same). ” [5]

Islamic Etiquettes of Marital Intimacy

There are important guidelines for the spouses to observe when they intimately approach one another. In what follows, we briefly outline some of them, keeping the detailed coverage for the sequel to this book: "Closer than a Garment".

SUPPLICATION BEFORE INTERCOURSE

Even at the peak of his passion, a believer does not forget his Lord (ﷻ). He remembers that his intercourse with his wife is a means of fulfilling many noble purposes - not only his lust. One of these noble purposes is producing a good progeny. Thus, it is important to supplicate to Allah to keep Satan away from him and his progeny. Ibn 'Abbas (ﷺ) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لو أن أحدَكم إذا أرادَ أن يَأتيَ أهلهُ قالَ: "بسم الله، اللّهُمَّ جنِّبنَا الشيطانَ، وجنِّب الشيطانَ مَا رَزَقتَنا،" فإنَّه إن قُضيَ بينَهما وَلَدٌ من ذلكَ لم يضُرَّه الشيطانُ أبداً.»

“When one of you wants to approach his wife, if he says:

"Bismillah, Allahumma jannib nash-Shaytan, wa jannib ish-Shaytana ma razaqtana – With the Name of Allah, O Allah, keep Satan away from us, and keep him away from what You grant us,"

If it is then decreed that they have a child (from that intercourse), Satan will never harm it. ” [6]

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[5] A combined report recorded by al-Bukhari, Ibn Abi Shaybah, and others.
[6] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

MISCELLANEOUS ADAB FOR INTERCOURSE

The following is a list of additional important adab that should be observed when being intimate or having intercourse with one's spouse.

1. The man may only have intercourse with his wife in her front entry (vagina). Approaching her from the back entry is a major sin.

2. During his wife's menses, a man may not have intercourse with her, but may otherwise enjoy other parts of her body. Performing intercourse with a menstruating woman is a major sin.

3. A person becomes junub (unclean) in one of two ways:

    a. By climaxing and ejaculation, which results from intercourse, wet dreams, foreplay, etc.

    b. By performing intercourse - regardless of whether it results in ejaculation or not.

4. A junub person must take a ghusl (bath) before being able to pray. It is further recommended for a junub to take the ghusl before going to sleep or mentioning Allah. If that is not possible, one should at least wash his (or her) private parts and perform wudu.

5. It is strongly prohibited for the two spouses to disclose to others the secrets of what takes place during their intimacy sessions.

The Morning Following the Wedding

On the morning following the wedding night, it is recommended for the husband to visit his family members and relatives, greet them, and supplicate for them. Anas (ﷺ) reported:

"In the morning following Allah's Messenger's (ﷺ) wedding with Zaynab, he visited his wives and exchanged with them salam and supplications. This was his practice on the morning following his wedding. " [7]

[7] Recorded by an-Nasai and Ibn Sa'd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Adab uz-Zifaf p. 138).

Honeymoon

A common practice is that the newlywed would leave right after their wedding on a "honeymoon" trip. Depending on their finances, that trip could be to a country or area that has attractions for tourism.

There is no doubt that the honeymoon is one of the non-Muslims's practices that many Muslims rush to imitate. It is usually an occasion for adding to one's record of sins: it involves mixing with many non - Muslims, listening to music, going to restaurants where alcohol is served, going to beaches and other attractions where the people are improperly attired, and so on.

If the newlywed get a few days off from work on the occasion of their wedding, they should not use them in disobeying Allah (ﷻ) Rather, they can take the chance to go on a 'Umrah trip or for visiting some family members to preserve the kinship ties and invite them to the good teachings of Islam.

FORBIDDEN MARRIAGES

Permanently Prohibited Women

INTRODUCTION

Permanently prohibited women are the women that a man may never marry. Permanent prohibition can be a result of blood, marriage, or foster (breast-feeding) relationships. A man is a mahram to any woman who is permanently prohibited to him.

Allah (ﷻ) mentions the permanently prohibited women in the following ayat:

وَلَا تَنكِحُواْ مَا نَكَحَ ءَابَآؤُكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدۡ سَلَفَۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ
فَٰحِشَةٗ وَمَقۡتٗا وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا ٢٢

"And do not marry the women whom your fathers had married - except what has already passed. Indeed, that was a shameful and hateful act (to Allah), and an evil way." [1]

حُرِّمَتۡ عَلَيۡكُمۡ أُمَّهَٰتُكُمۡ وَبَنَاتُكُمۡ وَأَخَوَٰتُكُمۡ وَعَمَّٰتُكُمۡ وَخَٰلَٰتُكُمۡ وَبَنَاتُ
ٱلۡأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ ٱلۡأُخۡتِ وَأُمَّهَٰتُكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِيٓ أَرۡضَعۡنَكُمۡ وَأَخَوَٰتُكُم مِّنَ ٱلرَّضَٰعَةِ
وَأُمَّهَٰتُ نِسَآئِكُمۡ وَرَبَٰٓئِبُكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِي فِي حُجُورِكُم مِّن نِّسَآئِكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِي دَخَلۡتُم بِهِنَّ
فَإِن لَّمۡ تَكُونُواْ دَخَلۡتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَحَلَٰٓئِلُ أَبۡنَآئِكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِنۡ

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[1] Soorah An-Nisa 4:22.

أَصۡلَٰبِكُمۡ وَأَن تَجۡمَعُواْ بَيۡنَ ٱلۡأُخۡتَيۡنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدۡ سَلَفَۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورٗا
رَّحِيمٗا ﴿٢٣﴾

"Prohibited to you (for marriage) are your mothers, daughters, sisters, paternal aunts, maternal aunts, brother's daughters, sister's daughters, foster mothers who breast-fed you, foster sisters, wives' mothers, step-daughters under your custody and born of your wives with whom you have had intercourse - but if you have not had intercourse with them, there is no sin upon you (if you marry their daughters) -, the wives of your sons who are your own offspring, and that you simultaneously marry two sisters - except for what has already passed. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. " [2]

۞ وَٱلۡمُحۡصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُكُمۡۖ كِتَٰبَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيۡكُمۡۚ وَأُحِلَّ
لَكُم مَّا وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكُمۡ أَن تَبۡتَغُواْ بِأَمۡوَٰلِكُم مُّحۡصِنِينَ غَيۡرَ مُسَٰفِحِينَۚ فَمَا
ٱسۡتَمۡتَعۡتُم بِهِۦ مِنۡهُنَّ فَـَٔاتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةٗۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ فِيمَا
تَرَٰضَيۡتُم بِهِۦ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ ٱلۡفَرِيضَةِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمٗا ﴿٢٤﴾

"And (also prohibited to you are) all married women, except those (captives and slaves) that your right hands possess. This is Allah's decree upon you. And lawful to you are all (women) beyond these, provided that you seek them (in marriage) with gifts from your monies, desiring chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse. So for those whom you enjoy (in marriage) from among them, give them their due compensation (mahr) as an obligation, And there is no blame upon you for what you mutually agree (to give) beyond the obligation. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Wise. " [3]

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[2] Soorah An-Nisa 4:23.
[3] Soorah An-Nisa 4:24.

PROHIBITION BASED ON BLOOD RELATIONSHIPS

From the above, we conclude that the women who are permanently prohibited for a man because of blood relationships are seven types:

1. His mothers (including his grandmothers from both sides, and further up).

2. His daughters and granddaughters (and further down).

3. His sisters (both full and half-sisters).

4. His paternal aunts (including his father's, grandfathers', mother's, and grandmothers' paternal aunts, and further up).

5. His maternal aunts (including his father's, grandfathers', mother's, and grandmothers' maternal aunts, and further up).

6. His brothers' (both full and half-brothers) daughters and granddaughters (and further down).

7. His sisters' (both full and half-sisters) daughters and granddaughters (and further down).

PROHIBITION BASED ON MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS

The women who are permanently prohibited for a man because of marital relationships are four types:

1. The wives of his fathers (and grandfathers, and further up). This prohibition occurs as soon as a father executes his marriage contract on a woman, even if he does not perform intercourse with her.

2. The wives of his sons (and grandsons, and further down). This prohibition occurs as soon as a son executes his marriage contract on a woman, even if he does not perform intercourse with her.

3. His wive's mothers (and grandmothers, and further up). This prohibition occurs as soon as a man executes his marriage contract on a woman, even if he does not perform intercourse with her.

4. The daughters (and granddaughters, and further down) of the wives with whom he performed intercourse.

In regard to step-daughters (Case 4 above), most scholars hold the opinion that they are all prohibited, without exception - as soon as their step-father performs intercourse with their mother. They say that the "custody" restriction in the above ayah (4:23) is a description applicable to all step-daughters.

PROHIBITION BASED ON MILK RELATIONSHIPS

The milk of the breast-feeding mother gives the baby nutrition and growth. When a woman breast-feeds a baby, he becomes related to herin a way similar to her delivered child. 'A'ishah, Ibn 'Abbas, and 'Ali (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن اللهَ حرَّمَ من الرَّضاعِ ما حرَّمَ مِنَ الوِلادةِ (النسبِ).»

"Indeed, Allah has prohibited (of marriages), based on breast-feeding, what He has prohibited based on birth (or blood-relationships)."[4]

However, for breast-feeding to result in prohibitive relationships, it must satisfy the following conditions:

1. It should be performed on five or more distinct suckles.

2. The baby should be hungry and should drink its fill in each suckle.

3. All prohibiting suckles should take place before the baby's weaning at the age of two.

'A'ishah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تُحرِّمُ المصَّةُ ولا المصَّتان.»

"One or two suckles do not cause prohibition." [5]

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[4] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others. Review Irwa'ul-Ghalil no.1876 for the various narrations of this hadith.

In the following, we mean by "foster mother" the woman who breast-fed a person according to the above-listed conditions. And a "foster father" is the man who was married to the foster mother at the time of breast-feeding that person; i.e., he is the man who caused the foster mother's milk.

In the following table, we list the eight common types of women who are permanently prohibited for a man because of breast-feeding relationships:

	Foster Relationship	**Counts as**
1	Foster mother	Mother
2	Foster daughter	Daughter
3	Foster mother's mother	Maternal grandmother
4	Foster father's mother	Paternal grandmother
5	Foster mother's sister	Maternal aunt
6	Foster father's sister	Paternal aunt
7	Foster mother's granddaughter	Niece
8	Foster sister	Sister

[5] Recorded by Muslim, Abu Dawud, and others.

A man's foster sisters are of three types:

Description of the Sister	Counts as
a. Breast-fed by his foster mother, and from the same husband's milk	Full sister
b. Breast-fed by his foster mother, but from the milk of two different husbands	Half- maternal sister
c. Breast-fed by a wife of his foster father other than his foster mother	Half-paternal sister

It is important to note here that the foster relationships only apply to the breast-fed person and his offspring. They do not apply to other relatives, such as his blood brothers and sisters.

For example, consider a man "A" has a foster sister "B", a blood brother "C", and a son "D". In this case, "A" and "D" are prohibited from marrying "B", but "C" is not.

Temporarily Prohibited Women or Marriages

Temporary prohibition is that which prevents a man from marrying a woman under certain conditions. If the conditions cease to hold, the prohibition ends and the woman becomes permissible for him.

The temporarily prohibited women are the following:

MARRYING MORE THAN FOUR WOMEN

If a man has four wives, all other women become temporarily prohibited for him. This means that he may not consider any additional woman for marriage unless he divorces one of his wives.

It is not allowed for a man to have more than four wives in Islam. Even for those who had more than four wives before embracing Islam, the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded them to select four of them and divorce the rest.

SIMULTANEOUSLY MARRYING TWO SISTERS

As long as a man is married to a particular woman, all of her sisters become temporarily prohibited for him; he may not marry any of them unless he divorces their sister.

SIMULTANEOUSLY MARRYING AUNTS AND THEIR NIECES

It is not permissible to simultaneously marry an aunt and her niece. A man would have to divorce one of the two before he may marry the other.

WOMEN MARRIED TO OTHER MEN

This is clearly expressed in the above ayah of Surat un-Nisa' (4:24). The same applies to a woman who has been divorced a non-terminal divorce (first two times) and is still in her 'iddah. Such a woman is considered to be still under her husband's charge and no one may approach her for marriage before the completion of her 'iddah.

ADULTERESSES

It is prohibited to marry a woman who is known to be an adulteress or a prostitute - unless she had demonstratively repented.

'Amr Bin Shu'ayb[6] reported from his father from his grandfather that Marthid Bin Abi Marthid al-Ghanawi (رضي الله عنه) used to help the Muslim captives run away from Makkah. A prostitute in Makkah called 'Anaq was his girlfriend. He came to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and asked him, “O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), may I marry 'Anaq?"Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) did not say anything until the ayah three of Soorah an-Nur was revealed, so he summoned him and said, **<Do not marry her.>** [7]

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[6] 'Amr Bin Shu'ayb is the son of Shu'ayb Bin Muhammad Bin 'Abdillah Bin 'Amr Bin al-'As. He is thus the great-grandson of 'Abdullah Bin 'Amr (رضي الله عنه).

[7] Recorded by Abu Dawud, an-Nasai, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa'ul-Ghalil no. 1886).

MUSHRIK WOMEN

A mushrik woman may not be married unless she embraces Islam. The subject of marrying non-Muslim women is covered in detail in a subsequent section.

MARRIAGE DURING IHRAM

A person who goes for Hajj or 'Umrah is prohibited from courting or marrying while he is in the state of ihram [8]

MARRYING A PREGNANT CAPTIVE-WOMAN

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited having intercourse with female war captives (whether as concubines or regular wives) until they purify their wombs from previous relationships.

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said in regard to the war-captives of Awtas battle:

«لا توطأ حاملٌ حتى تضعَ، ولا غيرُ ذات حملٍ حتى تحيضَ.»

"One may not copulate with a pregnant woman until she delivers, nor with a non-pregnant woman until she menstruates (one time)." [9]

Other Prohibited Marriages

There are other forms of marriage that were practiced during Jahiliyyah or the early years of Islam, but were subsequently prohibited. Among them are the following.

MARRIAGE OF MUT AH

The mut'ah (enjoyment) marriage is a temporary marriage. Its duration is specified at the time that the contract is executed. At the end of the term, the two

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[8] Ihram: A sacred temporary state for a pilgrim during which he renounces many of the worldly pleasures such as women and perfume.

[9] Recorded by Abu Dawud, al-Bayhaqi, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7479 & Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 187).

spouses leave each other without divorce. Furthermore, the two partners do not inherit from each other.

This type of marriage was common during Jahiliyyah. Its purpose was to merely fulfill a physical need for the man. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) permitted it for some time, and finally prohibiting it permanently.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«هدمَ المُتعةَ النّكاحُ والطلاقُ والعدّةُ والميراثُ.»

"Mut'ah has been abolished by marriage, divorce, 'iddah, and inheritance. " [10]

The 'ulama' differ as to whether the mut'ah marriage was prohibited during the fight of Khaybar or the Conquest of Makkah. The latter position appears to be stronger, and is adopted by most of the 'ulama.

Sabrah Biu Ma'bid (رضي الله عنه) reported that at the time of the Conquest of Makkah, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يا أيها الناسُ! إني قد كنتُ أذِنتُ لكم في الاستِمتاعِ مِن النساءِ،
وإن اللهَ قد حرّمَ ذلِكَ من يَومِكم هذا إلى يوم القِيامَةِ. فمَن كانَ
عندَهُ منهُنّ شَيءٌ فليُخَلِّ سَبيلَه، ولا تأخُذوا مما آتيتُموهُنّ شيئاً.»

"O people! I had previously permitted you to have women by way of mut'ah. But indeed, Allah has now prohibited that until the Day of Resurrection. Thus, anyone who has any such women should let them go, and do not take any of what you gave them. "[11]

Sabrah (رضي الله عنه) also reported:

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[10] Recorded by Ibn Hibban, ad-Daraqutni, and al-Bayhaqi. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jam. no. 7022 & as-Sahihah no. 2402).

[11] Recorded by Muslim and Ibn Majah.

“On the year of the Conquest, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) permitted us to enjoy women (with mut'ah) as we were entering Makkah. But he later prohibited it for us even before we left Makkah. ”[12]

Ibn 'Abbas (ﷺ) did not know that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited the mut'ah marriage, so 'Ali (ﷺ) reproached him and said to him:

“Indeed, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited enjoying women (mut'ah) on the day of Khaybar, and he prohibited eating the ordinary donkeys (contrary to zebras).” [13]

MARRIAGE OF TAHLIL

If a man divorces his wife three times, he may not take her back unless she first marries another man [14]. If the second husband divorces her, she may then marry the first husband.

The woman must have intercourse with the second husband before she becomes permissible to the first husband (if the second husband willingly divorces her).

Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) reported that a case was presented to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as follows, "A man divorced his wife three times. Another man then married her, closed the doors, and dropped the curtains (i.e., he had full privacy with her), but divorced her without performing intercourse with her. Would that make her permissible to the first husband?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«لا تَحِلُّ للأوّلِ حتى يجامِعَها الآخرُ.»

“She does not become permissible for the first (husband) until the second performs intercourse with her.” [15]

Similarly, 'A'ishah, Anas, and 'Ubayd Ullah Bin 'Abbas (ﷺ) reported that Rufa'ah al-Qarzi divorced his wife three times, after which she married 'Abd ur-Rahman Bin az-Zubayr. But she did not allow him to approach her and came to the

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[12] Recorded by Muslim, Ahmad, and al-Bayhaqi.
[13] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.
[14] Check Soorah Al-Baqarah 2:229.
[15] Recorded by an-Nasai, Ahmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7253 & Irwa‘ ul-Ghaltl no. 1887).

Prophet (ﷺ) claiming that he was impotent, and she requesting divorce. 'Abd ur-Rahman refuted this, saying that she actually wanted to go back to her first husband. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) then told her that this may not happen unless she had intercourse with the second husband. [16]

In order to overcome this restriction, some people apply a trick to make it possible for the woman to go back to her husband. Another man (called muhill or muhallil) would marry her, and include a condition in the marriage contract that, as soon as he copulates with her, their marriage becomes terminated. This is a form of mut'ah marriage, because it includes the temporary factor. In addition, it represents a clear defiance to Allah's commands and instructions. Because of this, it deserved Allah's curse.

'Ali Bin Abi Talib, 'Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, and Jabir Bin 'Abdillah (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لعن اللهُ المُحلِّلَ والمُحَلَّلَ له.»

"Allah curses the one who performs tahlil, and the one for whom it is performed."[17]

'Uqbah Bin 'Amir (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ألا أخبرُكم بالتيسِ المُستَعارِ؟ هوَ المُحِلُّ، فلعَنَ اللهُ المُحِلَّ والمحَلَّلَ لهُ.»

"Shouldn't I tell you about the borrowed billy goat? It is a person who performs tahli1. May Allah curse the one who performs tahlil, and the one for whom it is performed. " [18]

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[16] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others. Review lrwa'ul-Ghalil no. 1997 for the various reports of this hadith.

[17] Recorded by A1)mad, an-Nasai, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa'ul-Ghalil no. 1897 & Sahih ul-Jami' no. 5101).

[18] Recorded by Ibn Majah, al-Hakim, and al-Bayhaqi. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2596 & lrwa'ul-Ghalil no. 1897).

Nafi' reported that a man said to Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), "Is it permissible for me to marry a woman to make her lawful for her (previous) husband, even though he did not ask me to do it, and I did it without his knowledge." He replied:

"No! The marriage should only be based on real interest: if you like her you keep her, and if you dislike her you divorce her. We indeed used to consider this (tahlil) as zina during Allah's Messenger's (ﷺ) time. And those who do it will continue to be in a state of zina, if his intention was to make her lawful to the other man, even if they stay together for twenty years! " [19]

MARRIAGE OF SHIGHAR

Shighar is a process whereby two men inter-marry each others' daughters or women under their custody without either one giving a mahr. Nafi' (رحمه الله) explained:

"Shighar is that a man would marry his daughter to another man with the condition that the other man would marry him his daughter. And they would not require any mahr in between them. " [20]

Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited shighar marriages [21] and said:

«لا شِغارَ في الإسلامِ.»

"No shighar (is permissible) in Islam." [22]

Even when dowries are specified, this inter-marriage remains as a source of doubt that should be avoided.

Al-A'raj reported that al-'Abbas Bin 'Abdillah Bin 'Abbas gave his daughter in marriage to 'Abd ur-Rahman Bin al-Hakam, and 'Abd ur-Rahman gave his daughter to him in marriage, and they named some mahrs. Yet, Mu'awiyah (who was the khalifah then) wrote to Marwan Bin al-Hakam commanding him to separate between them and saying:

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[19] Recorded by al-Hakim, al-Bayhaqi, and at-Tabarani. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1898).
[20] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.
[21] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.
[22] Recorded by Muslim and others.

“This is the shighar marriage that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited.”[23]

MARRIAGE WITH THE INTENTION OF DIVORCE

Some men may marry a woman for a specific purpose, intending within themselves to divorce her as soon as that purpose is accomplished. An example of this is a common practice in some Western countries where a foreigner marries a native woman in order to obtain residency in her country, planning to divorce her as soon as he achieves his goal.

If the marriage contract sets a term for this kind of marriage, it becomes a prohibited form of mut'ah marriage. If it does not, the majority of 'ulama' consider that this marriage is valid but the man sinful because he deceives the woman by hiding his initial intention from her.

Marrying Non-Muslims

GENERAL RULE

Allah (ﷻ) prohibited marriage with the mushriks, males and females:

وَلَا تَنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكَٰتِ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَّ ۚ وَلَأَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۗ وَلَا تُنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ ۚ وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۖ

“And do not marry pagan women until they believe (in Allah alone). Indeed, a believing female slave (of Allah) is better than a pagan, even though she (the pagan) might appeal to you. And do not marry pagan men until they believe. Indeed, a believing male slave (of Allah) is better than a pagan, even though he might appeal to you. Those (mushriks) invite (you) to the Fire, whereas Allah invites to Jannah and to forgiveness, by His permission. ” [24]

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[23] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Ibn Hibban. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Glalil no. 1896).
[24] Soorah Al-Baqarah 2:221.

Every non-Muslim is a mushrik. This includes the People of the Scripture (the Jews and Christians) if they worship anyone besides Allah (like Jesus or 'Uzayr) or hold other wrong beliefs about Allah (﷾).

EXCEPTION TO THE RULE

Allah (﷾) made exception to the above rule by permitting Muslim men to marry Jewish and Christian women - with an important condition: they must be chaste, which means that they are not promiscuous and have not previously had illegitimate sexual relationships with men. Allah (﷾) says:

ٱلْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ ۖ وَطَعَامُ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ حِلٌّ لَّكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ
لَّهُمْ ۖ وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
إِذَآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَٰفِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِىٓ أَخْدَانٍ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ
بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُۥ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٥﴾

"This day all good foods have been made lawful for you; and the food of those who have been given the Scripture is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them; and (lawful for you for marriage are) chaste believing women and chaste women from among those who were given the Scripture before you - when you have given them their due compensation - desiring by that chastity, not illicit relationship or taking secret lovers. And whoever denies the faith - his deeds have surely become worthless, and he will be, in the Hereafter, among the losers. " [25]

WHO "THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK" ARE

Some of the companions took the position that the above permission only applied to the "unitarian" People of the Book. They argued in regard to a Trinitarian Christian woman, "What form of shirk is worse than her claim that her Lord is Jesus?" For example, 'Ali (رضي الله عنه) said:

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[25] Soorah Al-Maidah 5:5.

"The Arab Christians' slaughtering may not be eaten, because they do not hold to (true) Christianity besides drinking alcohol."[26]

On the other hand, 'Umar (ﷺ) was asked whether it was lawful to eat from the slaughtered meat of a group of Jews who read the Torah and observed the Sabbath but do not believe in resurrection. He said:

"They are a group from the People of the Book." [27]

Ibn 'Abbas (ﷺ) said:

"Eat from the slaughtering of the Taghlib [28] **and marry from their women. "** [29]

Az-Zuhri (ﷺ) was asked about the slaughtering of the Arab Christians. He replied that it was lawful, and said:

"Whoever embraces a religion is considered one of its people." [30]

Ash-Sha'bi (ﷺ) said in answer to a similar question:

"Allah has made their slaughtering lawful, and your Lord is never forgetful. " [31]

There are many other similar authentic reports from the salaf considering that the Christians and Jews are from "the People of the Book" regardless of their beliefs. This appears to be the stronger of the two opinions. [32]

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[26] Recorded by 'Abd ur-Razzak and al-Bayhaqi. Verified to be authentic by Mustafa al-'Adawi (Jami'u Ahkam in-Nisa 3:125).

[27] Recorded by 'Abd ur-Razzak and al-Bayhaqi. Verified to be authentic by Mustafa al-'Adawi (Jami'u Ahkam in-Nisa 3:126).

[28] An Arab Christian tribe.

[29] Recorded by Ibn Abi Shaybah. Verified to be authentic by Mustafa al-'Adawi (Jami'u Ahkam in-Nisa 3: 126).

[30] Recorded by 'Abd ur-Razzak. Verified to be authentic by Mustafa al-'Adawi (Jami'u Ahkam in-Nish 3:127).

[31] Recorded by 'Abd ur-Razzak. Verified to be authentic by Mustafa al-'Adawi (Jami'u Ahkam in-Nish 3:127).

[32] Review Jami'u Ahkam in-Nisa 3:122-128.

A DIFFICULT CONDITION

The condition of "chastity" does not usually hold in our time. A chaste woman is one who has been preserved within her house like a jewel, never having been involved in kissing, touching, petting, or any form of promiscuous relationships with men other than her husband.

A non-Muslim woman has no faith that would prevent her from committing the sin. Added to that is today's open Western culture that has permitted zina with the approval and encouragement of the parents and relatives. It is seldom to find a girl pass her teenage years without being involved in sexual relationships. Virginity is now a rarity among the Westerners.

Some people may ask, "What if a Christian woman repented from her former promiscuous behavior? Would it then be permissible to marry her?" The answer is that repentance is an act of worship specific to the Muslims. Its first condition is ikhlas (sincerity) to Allah. How could a non-Muslim fulfill this? Her only repentance, then, is by embracing Islam (for the sake of Allah, and not for marriage).

Even at the peak of the Islamic power and dominance, 'Umar (﵁) was against marrying from the People of the Book. Abu Wa'il reported that Huthayfah (﵁) married a Jewish woman. Umar (﵁) wrote to him, "Divorce her." He wrote back, "If this is unlawful, I will divorce her." 'Umar (﵁) wrote:

"إني لا أزعُمُ أنها حَرامٌ، ولكني أخافُ أن تَعاطَوْا المُومِسَاتِ مِنهن."

"I do not claim that it is unlawful, but I fear that you (Muslims) will soon partake of their whores (if everyone takes this matter lightly)." [33]

Jabir (﵁) was asked about marrying Jewish and Christian women. He replied:

"We used to marry them during the times of fighting when we were with Sa'd Bin Abi Waqqas (﵁) in al-Kufah. That was because we could then

[33] Recorded by al-Bayhaqi and Sa'd Bin Mansur. Verified to be authentic by Mustafa al-'Adawi (Jami'u Ahkam in-Nisa 3:122).

hardly find any Muslim women. But when we came back (from the fights), we divorced them. "[34]

CONCLUSION

In our times, the Muslims are weak and have the lower hand, even in their own countries. If one marries a non-Muslim woman, he will not be able to enforce an Islamic environment in his own house. He will see her wear the cross, pray to Jesus, eat pork, and raise his children upon disbelief. This, by itself, is a major act of disobedience that he would bring about for himself and his own offspring. What sin is greater than this sin? This alone is a sufficient reason for the prohibition of such marriages under the current circumstances.

The excuse that some people give, "This marriage is better than committing zina," is absurd. First, such a marriage is not permissible to start with. Second, its outcome is worse than the worst outcome of zina.

Therefore, young men should fear Allah and only marry Muslim women who will be good companions for them in this life and would help raise their children upon Islam.

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[34] Recorded by ash-Shill. (in al-Umm) and al-Bayhaqi. Verified to be authentic by Mustafa al-'Adawi (Jami'u Ahkam in-Nisa 3:124).

A FAIR PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

AN ESSENTIAL BOND

Marriage is a bond held together by mutual rights and responsibilities for each of the two spouses. It is a partnership between them, and they are both required to play an active role in that partnership.

The man is appointed as the leader of the household, and the woman as the supportive helper whose expertise in many areas cannot be handled by the man. Some of the women who have been corrupted by the Western ideologies want to be leaders of the family. But only chaos would result in such a family where the correct and natural positions are reversed.

Both the husband and wife have certain rights and duties. A happy and successful marriage is assured if both of them fulfill their duties and preserve each others' rights. Violating those rights is a sure way to misery and failure.

SHARED OBLIGATIONS AND SHARED REWARDS

Some responsibilities and obligations equally apply to the man and woman. For instance, the obligation of believing in Allah (﷾) and following His commands is identical for both of them. Similarly, they are both responsible and accountable for their actions. They are both equally required to learn the correct religion, worship Allah (﷾), and call to His way. The moral standards are the same for both of them, as are many of the regulations for dealing with other human beings.

The man and woman get similar rewards for obedience to Allah (﷾), and similar punishment for disobedience or sinning. Allah (﷾) says:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ
وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

“Whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely grant him a good life, and will surely give them their reward according to the best of what they used to do.” [1]

And Allah (ﷻ) says:

فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّى لَآ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَـٰمِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ ۖ بَعْضُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْضٍ ۖ

“Their Lord responded to them (saying), "Verily, I will not let the deeds of any worker among you go to waste - whether male or female; you are of one another.” [2]

BETWEEN EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

In comparing between women and men, we should realize that Islam does not equate those who are inherently different. There are matters in which men are given preference over women, and vice versa. These preferences stem from the difference in their ability of performing various tasks. Therefore, rather than equating those who can never be equal, our concern should be directed toward fairness in dealing with both.

NATURAL DIFFERENCES

We conclude from the above that the Islamic regulations regarding human beings are equally applicable to men and women. But this does not mean that men and women are identical in everything.

There are certain regulations that strictly apply to women because of their feminine nature, and others that strictly apply to men because of their masculine nature.

Among the most important gender-based instructions were indicated in one of the Prophet's (ﷺ) last speeches. 'Amr Bin al-Ahwas al-Jushami (رضي الله عنه) reported that he

[1] An-Nahl 16:97
[2] Al-'lmran 3:195

heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) in the "Farewell Pilgrimage" (on 'Arafah) praise and glorify Allah, remind and reproach the people, and then say:

«ألا واستوصوا بالنساء خيراً، فإنهن عوانٍ عندكم، ليس تملكون
منهن شيئاً غير ذلك، إلا أن يأتين بفاحشةٍ مبينة. فإن فعلن
فاهجروهن في المضاجع، واضربوهن ضرباً غير مبرّح، فإن أطعنكم
فلا تبغوا عليهن سبيلاً. ألا إن لكم على نسائكم حقاً، ولنسائكم
عليكم حقاً. فأما حقُّكم على نسائكم، فلا يوطِئن فُرُشَكم من
تكرهون، ولا يأذنَّ في بيوتكم لمن تكرهون. ألا وحقهن عليكم أن
تحسنوا إليهن في كسوتهن وطعامهن.»

"Lo! Take good care of women, for they surely are captives under your charge, and you do not possess of them any more than this (subordination) - unless they commit a manifest sin. If they do, abandon them in sleep, and beat them lightly. If they obey you, do not apply any further punishment. Lo! you have a right upon your women, and your women have a right upon you. Your right upon them is that they should not admit for sitting upon your furnishings or entering into your home anyone you dislike. Lo! And their right upon you is that you treat them well in terms of clothing and food. " [3]

This clearly indicates that there are specific rights for the women upon their husbands, and other rights specific for the men upon their wives. Keeping this in mind, we emphasize that the subject of this module is to discuss the main shared rights and obligations, leaving the gender-based rights and obligations to the following two modules.

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[3] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7880 & Irwa'ul-Sahih no. 2030).

Responsibility and Accountability

Being masters of the home unit, both men and women carry the great responsibility of establishing and nurturing the family unit.

Being masters and holders of responsibility, both men and women are also answerable before Allah (ﷻ) for their responsibility. Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كُلّكم راعٍ، وكُلّكم مسؤولٌ عن رعيّته. فالإمامُ راعٍ، وهو مسؤولٌ عن رعيته؛ والرجل راع في أهله، وهو مسؤول عن رعيته؛ والمرأة راعية في بيت زوجها، وهي مسؤولةٌ عن رعيتها؛ والخادم راع في مال سيده، وهو مسؤول عن رعيته؛ والرجل راع في مال أبيه، وهو مسؤولٌ عن رعيته. فكلكم راع، وكلكم مسؤول عن رعيته.»

"Each one of you is entrusted with a responsibility, and each one of you will be questioned about his responsibility. The ruler is responsible (for his people), and will be questioned about his responsibility. The man is responsible for his family, and will be questioned about his responsibility. The women is responsible for her husband's house, and will be questioned about her responsibility. The servant is responsible for his master's property, and will be questioned about his responsibility. And a man is responsible for his father's wealth, and will be questioned about his responsibility. Thus, each one of you has a responsibility, and each one of you will be questioned about his responsibility. " [4]

It is very important for men and women to have a clear understanding of the great responsibility that rests on both of their shoulders. This would make them work hard and cooperate well to fulfill their mission and prepare answers for the Day when they will be questioned about the way they handled their responsibilities.

[4] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

Good Manners

EXCELLENCE OF GOOD MANNERS

Part of the great responsibility of both men and women within their home-unit is to exhibit and act with good manners. Good manners are the distinctive characteristics of the religion of Islam. In a nutshell, they are the reason behind the Prophet's (ﷺ) mission. Abu Hurayrah (﵁) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إنما بُعثتُ لأُتمِّمَ صالحَ (أو مكارمَ) الأخلاقِ.»

"I have only been sent (by Allah) to complete the good manners."[5]

We note here that "good manners" in Islam are not limited to truthfulness, kindness, generosity, and other traits that are commonly known to represent good manners. Rather, "good manners" encompass good manners with Allah (ﷻ) that are exhibited by truly believing in Him and obeying Him, good manners with the Prophet (ﷺ) that are exhibited by truly following him, and good manners with other people.

The best people after the Prophet (ﷺ) are those with the best manners. 'Abdullah Bin 'Amr (﵁) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن من خِيارِكم أحسنَكم أخلاقاً.»

"Indeed, among the best of you are those with the best manners." [6]

And 'Abdullah Bin 'Umar (﵁) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أفضلُ المؤمنين أحسنُهم خُلُقاً.»

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[5] Recorded by Ibn Sa'd, al-Hakim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2349 & as-Sahihah no. 45).

[6] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

"The best among the believers are those with the best manners." [7]

A Muslim should display good manners in all of his dealings. This would grant him a most distinguished position among other Muslims.

Good manners makes a believer worthy of the love of the Messenger (ﷺ) and the closeness to him in Jannah.

And Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أكثرُ ما يُدخِل الناسَ الجنةَ تقوى اللهِ وحسنُ الخُلُق،
وأكثرُ ما يُدخِل الناسَ النارَ الفمُ والفرج.»

"The things that mainly cause people to enter Jannah are revering Allah and good manners. And those that mainly cause people to enter the Fire are the mouth and the private parts. " [8]

Good manners should not be limited to dealing with distant people. Rather, they should best be implemented with close relatives. More importantly, the two spouses should interact with each other in the highest form of good character. Within the family, one's true character is projected without disguise, because one is then free from most of the formality or showoff that are usually exercised with other people.

Thus, exercising good manners is a shared right and duty between the two spouses; it is emphasized by their extreme closeness, and is necessary for the well being of their relationship. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أكملُ المؤمنين إيماناً أحسنُهم خُلُقاً، وخِيارُكم خِيارُكم لنسائهم.»

"The believers with the most complete iman are those with most refined manners. And the best among you are those who are best to their women. " [9]

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[7] Recorded by Ibn Majah and al-Hakim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 1128 & as-Sahihah no. 1374).

[8] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Ahmad, and Ibn Majah. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 977).

Therefore, in dealing with one's spouse, one should exhibit good manners in all respects. A detailed discussion of that would be exhaustive and beyond the scope of this book. Yet, in the following sub-sections we discuss some of the most important character traits that must be observed in dealings within the family unit.

TRUTHFULNESS

Allah (ﷻ) praises the truthful in many places of His Book, and considers truthfulness a quality of the believers[10]. He also condemns the liars and considers laying a quality of the hypocrites[11].

Also, the Prophet (ﷺ) praised truthfulness and indicated that it leads to Jannah, and condemned lying and indicated that it leads to the Hellfire.

Truthfulness brings trust and confidence between the two spouses, which are necessary elements for the success of any partnership, marriage being no exception. Lying and deceit, on the other hand, constitute a precarious way that may lead to quick destruction.

Some people carry the misconception that it is permissible to lie to one's spouse without limits. This misconception derives from misunderstanding the following hadiths.

Umm Kulthum Bint 'Uqbah (رضي الله عنها)[12] reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا أعدّه كاذباً: الرجل يصلح بين الناس، يقول القولَ لا يريد به إلا الإصلاحَ.
والرجل يقول في الحرب. والرجل يحدّث امرأته، والمرأةُ تحدّث زوجَها.»

"I do not consider him lying: a man who appeases among (dissenting) people and utters a (false) statement only for the sake of reconciliation; a man who

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[9] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Hibban. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 1232 & as-Sahihah no. 284).

[10] See, for example, at- Tawbah 9: 119.

[11] See, for example, al-Munafiqun 63:1.

[12] She is the wife of 'Abd ur-Rahman Bin 'Awf (رضي الله عنه).

says a (false) statement (to the enemy) during war; and a man who chats with his wife, or a woman who chats with her husband." [13]

It is clear from the above hadith that lying between the two spouses is limited to pleasant chatting. That would be in situations such as a man telling his wife that she cooked the best food or has the best dress, or a woman telling her husband that the gift he gave her is most pleasing to her, or telling each other an entertaining imaginary story, and so on. And even in such cases, it is better to substitute lying with ma'arid - statements that carry double meanings, at least one of which being true.

HUMBLENESS

Humbleness is a required characteristic among the Muslims. Allah commands even His Messenger (ﷺ) to show humbleness to the believers[14]. 'Iyad Bin Himar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن اللهَ أوحى إليَّ أن: تواضعوا حتى لا يفخرَ
أحدٌ على أحد، ولا يبغيَ أحدٌ على أحدٍ.»

"Indeed, Allah has revealed to me that you must show humbleness, so that none among you would boast over anyone else, and none among you would transgress against anyone else." [15]

This should be well understood by the spouses. They should show humbleness toward each other, and should avoid boasting about wealth, social status, intelligence, beauty, relatives, ancestors, or any other favor that Allah (تعالى) may have granted them. Being boastful, especially during arguments, is a sign of ignorance and immaturity that they should both loathe to practice.

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[13] Recorded by Abu Dawud. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah na. 545 & Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7170).
[14] Ash-Shu'ara 26:215
[15] Recorded by Muslim, Abu Dawud, and others.

MERCY AND KINDNESS

The two spouses should show utmost compassion and mercy toward each other. They should be ever ready to overlook, forgive, and guide each other. As discussed early in this book, compassion is an important fruit of marriage, and should never be allowed to go to waste.

A merciful person is worthy of Allah's mercy. 'Abdullah Bin 'Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الراحمون يرحَمُهم الرّحْمٰن. ارحموا من في الأرض يرحمكم من في السماء.»

"The merciful ones are granted mercy by the Most Merciful (سبحانه وتعالى). Show mercy to those who are on Earth, and the One above the heavens will show mercy to you. " [16]

Similarly, Allah, the Most Kind, loves kindness and rewards generously for it. Whenever kindness is employed in a situation, it improves and helps it - contrary to harshness.

'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said to her:

«يا عائشة، إن اللهَ رفيقٌ، يحب الرفقَ في الأمر كلِّه، ويعطي على الرِّفقِ ما لا يعطي على العنف، وما لا يعطي على سواه. يا عائشةُ، عليكِ بتقوى اللهِ والرفق، فإن الرفقَ لم يكن في شيءٍ قطُّ إلا زانَه، ولا نُزِع من شيءٍ إلا شانَه.»

"O 'A'ishah! Indeed, Allah is Kind, and loves kindness in all affairs. He grants for kindness things that he would not grant for cruelty or any other thing. O 'A'ishah! Employ taqwa of Allah and kindness, for indeed, kindness

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[16] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3522 & as-Sahihah no. 925).

was never in a thing but it adorned it, and never was it removed from a thing but it disgraced it. " [17]

Indeed, a person without kindness and mercy brings harm on himself before anyone else. Such a person denies himself Allah's mercy and forgiveness.

Jarir Bin 'Abdillah (ؓ reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«مَن يُحرَمِ الرِّفقَ يُحرَمِ الخيرَ كلَّه.»

"He who is denied kindness has indeed been denied all forms of good."[18]

It is the obligation of both spouses to nurture kindness and mercy in their family. This should be the first cure that they apply when problems and differences arise between them. Not only would that help resolve their problems, but would also grant them Allah's love and mercy, as in the above hadiths.

FORGIVENESS

A Muslim should not have the attitude of revenge and "getting even". This would cause hatred among the Muslims and remove from among them feelings of love and security. A Muslim should always be willing to forgive, especially when dealing with the spouse and close relatives. Showing forgiveness makes a person worthy of Allah's forgiveness. In one of the reports of the above hadith by Jabir Bin 'Abdillah (ؓ), Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من لا يَرحمْ لا يُرحمْ، ومن لا يَغفِرْ لا يُغفَرْ له.»

"He who does not show mercy, no mercy will be shown to him (by Allah). And he who does not forgive will not be forgiven. " [19]

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[17] This is a combined narration recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, and others (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7920, 7921, and 7927).

[18] Recorded by Muslim, Ahmad, and others.

[19] Recorded by Ahmad and al-Tabarani (in al-Kabir). Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 6599 & 6600).

AVOIDING OPPRESSION

The two spouses should be fair and just in dealing with each other. They should avoid oppressing each other in any way. They should not take unfair advantage of their rights, or Abuse each other through their distinctive qualities. Oppression has been prohibited by Allah (ﷻ), even upon Himself! Abu Tharr (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يا عبادي، إني حرّمتُ الظُلمَ على نفسي
وجعلتُه بينكم محرّماً، فلا تظالموا.»

“Allah (ﷻ) says, "O my servants! I have indeed prohibited injustice upon Myself and made it prohibited among you, so do not oppress one another. ”[20]

Oppression is a great sin that deserves Allah's wrath and brings about His punishment in both lives. Jabir Bin 'Abdillah and 'Abdullah Bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«اِتّقوا الظُلمَ، فإن الظُلمَ ظُلماتٌ يوم القيامةِ.»

“A void oppression, because oppression will result in deep darkness on the Day of Resurrection.” [21]

Let not feelings of superiority and dominance creep into the heart of either of the two spouses, causing him (or her) to oppress the other spouse, thinking that he (or she) has accomplished thereby a well earned victory. Let them both ponder over the above hadiths, and let them beware of a secret curse that may arise from the heavy heart of an oppressed person. Anas Bin Malik (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[20] Recorded by Muslim.
[21] Recorded by Muslim and others.

«اتّقوا دعوة المظلوم، وإن كان كافراً، فإنه ليس دونها حجاب.»

"Avoid the oppressed's supplication (against you), even if he was a kafir, because there is no barrier in its way (to Allah)." [22]

And oppression is never forgotten, and will never go unpunished.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من كانت لأخيه عندَه مَظْلَمةٌ من عِرضٍ أو مال، فلْيتحلَّلْهُ اليومَ، قبلَ أن يُؤخَذَ منه يومَ لا دينارَ ولا درهم: فإن كان له عملٌ صالحٌ، أُخِذَ منه بقدرِ مظلَمَتِه؛ وإن لم يكن له عملٌ، أُخِذَ من سيِّئاتِ صاحبِه فجُعِلت عليه.»

"Whoever has oppressed his brother in regard to his honor or property should beg for his forgiveness today - before it will be taken from him on a Day when there will be no dinars or dirhams: If he has good deeds, some of them will be taken in the amount of his oppression; and if he has no good deeds, some of his (oppressed) companion's sins will be taken and loaded upon him." [23]

AVOIDING FOUL LANGUAGE

The marriage relationship should remain clean and refined from the filth and obscenity of the street. It should be exemplary, first between the two spouses, and then in front of their children, in uttering words pleasing to Allah, His Messenger (ﷺ), and the believers.

'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) advised her:

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[22] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Ya'la, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 767 & Sahih ul-Jami' no. 119).

[23] Recorded by al-Bukhari and Ahmad.

«يا عائشةُ، لا تكوني فاحشةً. إن اللهَ لا يحب الفاحِش المتفحِّش.»

"O 'A'ishah! Do not be obscene. Indeed, Allah does not love a vile person who relishes obscenity. " [24]

AVOIDING ARGUING AND QUARRELING

Frequent arguing and quarreling should be seriously avoided because it is a sure way to undermining the ties between the married couple. Each spouse should bear in mind that it is not always vital to prove his (or her) point and be the victor in every argument. Allah promises a house in Jannah for those who drops arguing, even when they are right. Abu Umamah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أنا زعيمٌ ببيتٍ في ربضِ الجنة لمن ترك المِراء وإن كان مُحِقاً، وببيت في وسط الجنة لمن ترك الكذب وإن كان مازحاً، وببيتٍ في أعلى الجنة لمن حسُن خلُقُه.»

"I am a guarantor of a house on the outskirts of Jannah for one who abandons arguing, even if he is right; and a house in the center of Jannah for one who abandons lying, even if he is joking; and a house in the highest place of Jannah for one who has good manners. " [25]

On the other hand, Allah hates a stubborn, quarrelsome person. 'A'ishah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أبغضُ الرجالِ إلى اللهِ الألدُّ الخَصِم.»

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[24] This is a combined narration recorded by Muslim, al-Bukhari (in al-Adab ul-Mufrad), and Abu Dawud (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7933 & 7922, and Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 2133).

[25] Recorded by Abu Dawud and ad-Diya' ul-Maqdisi. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 1464 & a''-Sahihah no. 273).

"The most hated man to Allah is that who is obstinately quarrelsome." [26]

RESOLVING PROBLEMS AMICABLY

There is always some chance for misunderstanding or disagreement between the two spouses. Some of these differences may cause one or both of them to turn away from the other and seek hasty solutions that may jeopardize the marriage. But it is recommended for them to first seek reconciliation, which Allah (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) considers as the best approach:

وَإِنِ ٱمْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنۢ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَآ أَن يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا
صُلْحًا ۚ وَٱلصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ ۗ وَأُحْضِرَتِ ٱلْأَنفُسُ ٱلشُّحَّ ۚ وَإِن تُحْسِنُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ فَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٢٨﴾

"And if a woman fears from her husband contempt or evasion, there is no sin upon them if they make terms of settlement between them - and settlement is (always) best. And present in (human) souls is stinginess. But if you do good and revere Allah indeed, Allah is ever A ware of all what you do. " [27]

Communication and Company

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

The two spouses should maintain a good level of communication between them. They should share their happiness, concerns, and sorrows. That preserves their ties of love and compassion, and fulfills the meaning of "dwelling" that should be established between them, as was discussed in the first part of this series. [28]

It was the Prophet's (ﷺ) regular practice to visit all of his wives every night, chatting lightly with each, before going to the one whose turn it was for that night.

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[26] Recorded by al-Bukhari and Muslim
[27] An-Nisa 4: 128
[28] Review "The Quest for Love & Mercy" by the author.

REGULATIONS FOR DESERTION

There are, of course, situations where it is permissible to desert another Muslim as a form of retribution. As an example, we will be discussing later the permission in Islam to desert the bed of a rebellious wife, and we will study instances where the Prophet (ﷺ) deserted some or all of his wives. However, deserting another Muslim should not be done except after exhausting easier approaches, and with the understanding that it is being implemented as a temporary form of treatment. Long-term abandonment brings repulsion and hardness of the heart[29] and is therefore prohibited.

Abu Hurayrah, Ibn 'Umar, Abu Ayyub, and other companions (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يحِلُّ لمسلمٍ أن يهجرَ أخاه فوق ثلاثةِ أيام.»

"It is not permissible for a Muslim to abandon his brother for more than three days." [30]

Aiding One Another

THE OBLIGATION OF MUTUAL HELP

Being sworn partners of good standing, the two spouses should do all that is within their capacity to help each other and make their partnership successful. That includes physical, monetary, and emotional support.

When one of the two spouses is performing a **permissible** act, it is **recommended** for the other spouse to help him (or her) to the best of his (or her) ability. And when one of the two spouses is performing an **obligation**, it is **incumbent** on the other spouse to help him (or her) to the best of his (or her) ability. Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

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[29] As the English saying goes, "Out of sight, out of mind."

[30] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

وَتَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلۡبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقۡوَىٰۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلۡإِثۡمِ وَٱلۡعُدۡوَٰنِۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلۡعِقَابِ ٢

"Help one another in righteousness and taqwa, and do not help one another in sinning and transgression. And fear and revere Allah; verily, Allah is severe in punishment. " [31]

ONE MAY NOT BE AIDED IN DISOBEYING ALLAH

On the other hand, we conclude from the above ayah that when one of the two spouses performs a **makruh (disapproved)** act, it is **disapproved** for the other spouse to help him (or her). And when one of the two spouses performs a **prohibited** act, it is **prohibited** for the other spouse to help him (or her). 'Ali (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا طاعةَ لِبَشَرٍ في معصيةِ اللهِ، إنما الطاعةُ في المعروفِ.»

"Obedience may not be offered to a human being if it involves disobeying Allah. Obedience should only be in good things. "[32]

AIDING EACH OTHER IN ACTS OF WORSHIP AND OBEDIENCE

An individual by himself may sometimes weaken or slacken in performing some acts of worship. Kind help and support would bring him added confidence and determination. And who is more suitable for giving that support than one's own spouse? A fine example on this is given by the Prophet (ﷺ) concerning the night prayers. Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[31] Al-Maidah 5:2.

[32] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others. A similar hadith is recorded by Ahmad and others from 'Imran Bin Husayn (ﷺ) and verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 179,180).

«رحِمَ اللهُ رجلاً قامَ مِن الليل فصلى، وأيقظَ امرأتَهُ فصلت،
فإن أبَت نضَحَ في وجهها الماءَ. ورَحِمَ اللهُ امرأةً قامَت مِن الليل
فصَلت، وأيقظت زوجَها فصلى، فإن أبى نضحَت في وجههِ الماءَ.»

"May Allah have mercy on a man who wakes up at night and prays, and wakes up his wife to pray — and if she resists, he would lightly spray water on her face; and may Allah have mercy on a woman who wakes up at night and prays, and wakes up her husband to pray — and if he resists, she would lightly spray water on his face. " [33]

One should note in this hadith the friendly and pleasant manner of waking the other spouse. In the middle of his sleep, a person will surely be very alarmed by someone abruptly shaking him or pouring a bucket of cold water over him, which would then make him reluctant to cooperate with the individual who caused him that annoyance and bother. On the other hand, a nice and friendly approach should normally result in good cooperation.

Safeguarding the Family

We discussed earlier in this module that both spouses have a major responsibility within the family. Part of that responsibility is to protect the family from damage or destruction. That can only be done through steering the family toward the good teachings of Islam and away from the evils of Satan and his followers.

Therefore, the two spouses must help each other in guiding their children toward Jannah and away from the Fire. Allah (ﷻ) says:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ

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[33] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3494).

“O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones. ”[34]

Enjoining the Good and Forbidding the Wrong

The two spouses should help each other in enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong, first toward one another, and then with other people.

Fulfilling Each Others' Desire

We have discussed in the first book of this series [35] that one of the main objectives of marriage is the preservation of chastity. This generally pertains more to the man than the woman; but it surely applies to the woman as well, as it is her husband's obligation to gratify her to the best of his ability.

Thus, it is an obligation on each of the two spouses to fulfill his (or her) marital duty toward the other spouse. They should both do all that they can, provided that it is Islamically permissible, to protect one another from Satan's temptations. More of this will be discussed in the next two chapters, and a detailed discussion of the acts of intimacy between the two spouses was presented in the second book of this series.[36]

[34] At-Tahrim 66:6
[35] Review "The Quest for Love & Mercy" by the author.
[36] Review "Closer Than a Garment" by the author.

THE HUSBAND'S OBLIGATIONS

The Woman's Rights

CULTURES PRIOR TO ISLAM

In ancient nations and societies that deviated from the pure Revelation, the woman was considered a tradable commodity. In some cultures, she was even believed to be a filthy being from the making of Satan. This notion about women was present even in Jewish and Christian texts.

Similarly, the woman's position was extremely degraded during Jahiliyyah. She was considered part of her father's or husband's property, and was transferred by inheritance like other parts of the estate. The Arabs regarded the birth of a baby girl a bad omen, and would often get rid of her by burying her alive.

The woman's status and rights are only established in Allah's fair guidance, which was brought by His messengers through the ages. After the alteration or obliteration of all of the previous messages, Islam came to crown all of those messages with a most perfect guidance from Allah, leaving no detail untouched, and reestablishing the right position for the woman. She is not a lesser being that the man may humiliate and oppress at convenience. Rather, she is his counterpart. 'Aishah, Anas, and Umm Sulaym (ﵹ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إنما النساءُ شقائقُ الرجال.»

"Indeed, the women are only full sisters of men." [1]

[1] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 1983 & 2333).

THE WOMAN'S RIGHTS IN ISLAM

The woman's rights are ordained by Allah, and no one may violate them for any reason. Al-Miqdam (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن الله تعالى يوصيكم بالنساء خيراً، فإنهنّ أمهاتُكم وبناتُكم وخالاتُكم. إن الرجلَ من أهل الكتاب يُزوَّج المرأة وما تعلق يداها الخيط، فما يرغبُ واحدٌ منهما عن صاحبه.»

"Indeed, Allah (ﷻ) commands you to be good to the women; indeed, they are your mothers, daughters, and (maternal) aunts. Indeed, a man from the People of the Book would be married to a woman who can hardly know how to pull a string (from ignorance, and yet, neither of them would want to depart from his companion. " [2]

The woman's lesser physical strength is not, by any means, a justification for the man to overstep her rights. Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إني أُحرِّجُ عليكم حقَّ الضعيفين: اليتيمِ والمرأةِ.»

"I strongly admonish you in regard to the right of the two weak ones: the orphan and the woman." [3]

THE WIFE'S RIGHTS IN ISLAM

The wife's rights on her husband are clearly ordained and strongly established in Islam. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) gave the following instruction to a number of his companions, including 'Uthman Bin Maz'un [4] and 'Abdullah Bin 'Amr [5] (ﷺ):

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[2] Recorded by at-Tabarani in al-Kabir. Initially verified to be weak by al-Albani. But he subsequently considered it hasan, as is noted by Zuhayr ash-Shawish in Da'if ul-Jami' no.1763.

[3] Recorded by Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and others. Verified to be f1asan by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 1015 & Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2447).

[4] Recorded by Ahmad and Abu Dawud. Verified lo be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 2015),

«إن لزوجِكَ عليك حقاً.»

“Your wife has a right upon you.” [6]

'Amr Bin al-Ahwas (ﷺ) reported [7] that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ألا إن لكم على نسائكم حقاً، ولنسائكم عليكم حقاً.»

“Lo! you have rights on your women, and your women have rights on you. ”[8]

Fulfilling the wife's rights is an indication of taqwa: reveling Allah and fearing His punishment. It is a trust between the man and his Lord (ﷻ), and He will question him about that trust. Jabir (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«اتقوا اللهَ في النساء، فإنكم أخذتُموهنّ بأمانة الله، واستحللتم فُروجَهنّ بكلمة الله، ولهنّ عليكم رزقُهُنّ وكِسوتُهُنّ بالمعروف.»

“Have taqwa of Allah in regard to your women. Indeed, you took them (in marriage) through a trust with Allah, and had access to their private parts by Allah's word (permission). They have a right on you - that you provide them with food and clothing in a fitting manner. ” [9]

The woman has rights and obligations. Her rights must be fulfilled in a serious and fair manner. This is an important requirement in Islam; neglecting it constitutes a clear act of disobedience and threatens the well-being of the family and the Muslim society.

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[5] The full hadith is cited later in this Module.

[6] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

[7] The full hadith is cited module 9 page 5.

[8] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasai, and Ibn Majah. Verified to be hasan by a1-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami no. 7880 & Irwa'ul-Ghalil no. 2030).

[9] Recorded by Muslim and Abu Dawud as part of Jabir's long hadith describing the Prophet's (ﷺ) Hajj.

With this introduction, we go on to discuss some of the rights that are specifically related to the women in Islam.

Protection

AN IMPORTANT OBLIGATION UPON THE HUSBAND

Security and safety are most important for a human being. One needs to feel reasonably secure in order to function normally and perform one's regular tasks.

The wife is usually the weaker of the two spouses, and looks to her husband for protection. Thus, one of the husband's most important obligations is providing protection for his wife. This is part of his responsibility as leader of the family:

ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ ۚ

"Men are in charge of women by (right of) what (qualities) Allah has given one over the other and what they spend (in support) from their wealth." [10]

This ayah shows that Allah gave leadership (or qawamah) to the man because of certain qualities that would normally enable him to conduct such a responsibility. A most important quality of a leader is his ability to protect his followers and provide for them an atmosphere of security and harmony.

Protection is a general term that covers physical, emotional, and other forms of well-being. The husband must strive to protect his wife in all of those respects. Some details in this regard will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

GHAYRAH

As a demonstration of a man's love toward his wife, he should have ghayrah for her. Ghayrah is the great concern about her well-being, and the zeal to protect her from anything that may harm her person, such as an evil touch, word, or look.

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[10] An-Nisa 4:34.

But ghayrah should not reach the point of distrusting and suspecting her without reason, nor should it be for the purpose of finding possible mistakes. Jabir Bin 'Atik (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن من الغَيْرة ما يحب الله، ومنها ما يبغض ألله. فأما الغيرة التي يحب الله، فالغيرةُ في ريبة. وأما التي يُبغِضُ الله، فالغيرة في غير ريبة.»

"Indeed, there is a form of ghayrah that Allah loves, and a form that Allah hates. Ghayrah that Allah loves is that which is based on (valid) suspicion. And ghayrah that Allah hates is that which is without (valid) suspicion. " [11]

A person without ghayrah is called dayyuth. A dayyuth is a person who has no sense of protection or honor regarding his wife. As we discussed in the second book of this series[12], a dayyuth will not enter Jannah.

AVOIDING UNNECESSARY SUSPICION

As is indicated in the above sub-section, one should not nurture unjustifiable doubts about his wife, nor should he dig for mistakes for which he would then blame her.

For this reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited a man from coming unexpectedly to his home - as though he is trying to catch his wife red-handed with something that he does not like. Jabir (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أطال أحدُكم الغَيْبَة فلا يطرُقْ أهلَه ليلاً.»

"When one of you is back from a long journey, he should not suddenly come to his family by night." [13]

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[11] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. I999).

[12] See "Closer than a Garment" by the author.

[13] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

SAFEGUARDING HER SECRETS

It is greatly prohibited for a man to expose his wife's secrets, especially in matters of privacy that no person would normally know except the husband, such as physical or emotional anomalies, reaction to some intimate acts, and so on.

Abu Said al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن من أشدِّ الناسِ عند اللهِ منزلةً يوم القيامة الرجلُ
يفضي إلى امرأته، وتُفضي إليه، ثم ينشُرُ سِرَّها.»

"Indeed, among the people who will have the most grievous position before Allah on the Day of Resurrection is a man who, after he privately approaches his wife and she privately approaches him, he exposes her secrets." [14]

Exposing the wife's secrets brings mistrust and fear into her heart, and could be an indication of a man's inclination toward being a dayyuth.

Financial Support

IT IS PART OF BEING RESPONSIBLE

One of the husband's major responsibilities toward his wife and family is providing financial support. This responsibility is one of the important reasons for which Allah appointed the man as the head of the family:

ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعۡضَهُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٖ وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُواْ مِنۡ
أَمۡوَٰلِهِمۡۚ

"Men are in charge of women by (right of) what (qualities) Allah has given one over the other and what they spend (in support) from their wealth." [15]

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[14] Recorded by Muslim, Abu Dawud, and others.
[15] An-Nisa 4:34.

In Jabir's (رضي الله عنه) hadith that we cited earlier, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ولهنّ عليكم رزقهنّ وكسوتهنّ بالمعروف.»

"They (your women) have a right on you - that you provide them with food and clothing in a fitting manner."[16]

IT SHOULD BE ACCORDING TO HIS CAPABILITY

The financial support required from the husband is in accordance with his financial capability. Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفۡسًا إِلَّا وُسۡعَهَاۚ

"Allah does not burden a person beyond his capacity." [17]

The husband is not required to give more than what he has, nor is he allowed to provide inadequate support when he can afford giving more.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

A man must seriously view his financial responsibility toward his wife and family. He should not look to others for help before he has exhausted all possible means of becoming independent and self sufficient. Self-sufficiency brings a feeling of security and dignity to the whole family, and is therefore a goal that deserves earnest pursuit.

It is unfortunate to observe that many Muslim men in the West rely strongly or solely on financial aid or public assistance - when they have the means of sufficing themselves, as in the above hadith. It is also pathetic to note that there are cases where a man would marry two or more wives and have them all live off public assistance while he conducts an irresponsible life, not performing his duty

[16] Recorded by Muslim and Abu Dawud.
[17] Al-Baqarah 2:286.

of supporting them, but rather, in some cases, taking the money that they thus earn and using it for his own purposes!

A HIGHLY REWARDABLE CHARITY

Besides being an obligation upon the man, spending on his wife and family counts as charity for him.

THE BEST FORM OF SPENDING

A man's concern should first be about reasonably sufficing his wife and family - even before giving money for Allah's cause. Jabir Bin Samurah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أعطى اللهُ أحدَكم خيراً فليبدأ بنفسه وأهلِ بيته.»

"When Allah gives one of you some good (i.e., sustenance), he should start by (spending on) himself and his family members." [18]

Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said;

«دينارٌ أنفقتَه في سبيل الله، ودينارٌ أنفقته في رقبة، ودينار تصدقت بهِ على مِسكين، ودينارٌ أنفقتَه على أهلِك، أعظمُها أجراً الذي أنفقته على أهلِكَ.»

"A dinar that you spend for Allah's cause (i.e.,jihad), a dinar that you contribute toward freeing a slave, a dinar that you give as charity to a needy person, and a dinar that you spend on your family: the one yielding the greatest reward is that which you spend on your family. "[19]

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[18] Recorded by Muslim, Ahmad, and others.
[19] Recorded by Muslim.

ADEQUATE SUPPORT IS AN EARNED RIGHT FOR THE WIFE

If a man does not financially support his wife in a manner compatible with his financial resources and her needs, she would be justified to take, without his permission, a portion of his money that would suffice her and her children.

THE GREAT SIN OF NEGLECT

It is a great sin for a man to neglect appropriately supporting his wife and dependents. 'Abdullah Bin 'Amr (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كفى إثماً أن تَحْبِسَ عمن تملك قُوتَهُ.»

"A sufficient sin for you would be that you hold (support) off those whom you are responsible for feeding." [20]

In another report, 'Abdullah Bin 'Amr (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كفى بالمرء إثماً أن يضيِّع من يقوت.»

"A sufficient sin for a person would be that he neglects those whom he should feed." [21]

PROVIDING HER WITH FOOD, CLOTHING, AND OTHER BASIC NEEDS

The wife's right for financial support includes food and clothing. Allah (ﷻ) says in regard to the nursing mothers:

وَعَلَى ٱلْمَوْلُودِ لَهُۥ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ

[20] Recorded by Muslim.

[21] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 4481 & Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 894).

“Upon the father is their (the mothers') provision and clothing according to what is reasonable.”[22]

The same meaning is seen in the above (hadith of Jabir (p. 5). Similarly, Mu'awiyah Bin Haydah al-Qushayri (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«حقُّ المرأة على الزوجِ إن يطعمَها إذا طَعِم، ويكسوَها إذا اكتسى،
ولا يضرُبَ الوجهَ، ولا يقبِّحَ، ولا يهجُرَ إلاّ في البيتِ.»

“A woman's right on her husband is that he feeds her when he eats, clothes her when he clothes himself, avoids hitting her face, avoids despising her (by words or actions), and avoids deserting her except within the same house. ”[23]

In another report, Mu'awiyah Bin Haydah (رضي الله عنه) said that he asked the Prophet (ﷺ), "O Allah's Messenger! What is the right of one's wife upon him?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«أن تطعمها إذا طعمت، وتكسوها إذا اكتسيت، ولا تقبِّح
الوجه، ولا تضرب، ولا تهجر إلا في البيت، كيف وقد أفضى
بعضكم إلى بعض – إلا بما حل عليهن.»

“ (Her right upon you is) that you feed her when you feed yourself, clothe her when you clothe yourself, avoid disgracing her face, avoid hitting her, and avoid deserting her except within the same house especially that you have come to be so intimate with each other - except in things that would make it permissible to punish her. ”[24]

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[22] Al-Baqarah 2:233.

[23] Recorded by al-Tabarani (in al-Kabir), al-Hakim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3149 & Irwa‘ ul-Ghalil no. 2033).

[24] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Ibn Majah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (hadith Abu Dawud no. 1875.1877 & Irwa'ul-Ghalil no. 2033).

PROVIDING A REASONABLE DWELLING

It is a right for the wife to be reasonably housed - in accordance with her husband's capability. Allah (ﷻ) says:

أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنتُم مِّن وُجْدِكُمْ وَلَا تُضَآرُّوهُنَّ لِتُضَيِّقُوا۟ عَلَيْهِنَّ ۚ

"Lodge them (the divorced) according to what you reside out of your means, and do not harass them in order to make life difficult for them." [25]

Even though this ayah directly applies to the divorced women during their waiting period, its meaning is more general. It also applies to all those for whom a man is responsible; most importantly: his wife and children.

THE DOWRY

The sadaq or mahr (dowry) is the first financial right of a woman upon her husband. It becomes due as soon as the marriage contract is performed. We have discussed this subject in the first book [26] of this series, so we refer the reader to it for more details.

Kind Treatment and Compassion

AN OBLIGATION UPON THE HUSBAND

The wife has the right to be respected and treated kindly. This is not an optional favor from her husband. It is an obligation established through a divine command. What a man cannot control (the heart's inclination) must not affect the way he treats his wife. Allah (ﷻ) commands:

ۚ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِن كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ

خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾

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[25] At-Talaq 65:6.

[26] See "The Quest for Love & Mercy" by the author.

"Live with them (your wives) in kindness; even if you dislike them, perhaps you dislike something in which Allah has placed much good."[27]

TOKEN OF HIS GOOD NATURE

Rendering kindness to the wife is a sign of good nature and righteousness. The Prophet (ﷺ) gave the perfect example of how a righteous believer should treat his wife. 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خيرُكم خيرُكم لأهله، وأنا خيرُكم لأهلي.»

"The best of you are those who are best to his family, and I am the best of you toward my family." [28]

UNDERSTANDING THE WOMAN'S FRAGILE NATURE

The woman has a fragile nature, both physically and emotionally. Understanding this enables the man to treat her with consideration and compassion.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that once Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was on a journey, and had his wives with him. An Abyssinian camel-driver called Anjashah was driving the women. He would sing lyrics as he drove the camels, and his singing would cause the women's camels to go faster. So Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) told him:

«ويحكَ يا أنْجَشَةُ! رُويدَكَ سَوْقَكَ بالقوارير.»

"Woe be to you, O Anjashah! Go slow in your (singing while) driving the (fragile) vessels[29]." [30]

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[27] An-Nisa 4:19.

[28] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 285).

[29] Note that we derived this book's title from this hadith.

[30] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

According to a number of scholars, including al-Bukhari, al-Qurtibi, and al-'Asqalani [31], Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) meant two things by this:

1. Women have a delicate nature and build, and driving them too fast could harm them or make them fall.

2. Women have an emotional nature, making it easy for them to be moved by singing and poetry, which could affect their hearts and bring fitnah to them.

UNDERSTANDING AND COPING WITH THE WIFE'S ATTITUDE

Every person, male or female, may exhibit an attitude of anger from time to time. A man should not make his wife's occasional anger a means of retaliation and revenge. Rather, he should deal with it jokingly or with light spirits, following the Prophet's (ﷺ) example. 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that one day Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said to her:

«إني لأعلم إذا كنتِ عني راضية، وإذا كنتِ عليّ غضبى.
أمّا إذا كنتِ عني راضيةً، فإنكِ تقولين: "لا وربِّ محمد."
وإذا كنتِ عليّ غضبى قلتِ: "لا وربِّ إبراهيم."»

"Indeed, I know when you are pleased with me, and when you are angry: When you are pleased with me you say (while making an oath), "No, by the Lord of Muhammad." And when you are angry with me you say, "No, by the Lord of Ibrahim."

She replied, "Yes indeed, by Allah, O Allah's Messenger! I do not abandon (when angry) except your name." [32]

UNDERSTANDING THE WOMAN'S DIFFERENT (BENT-RIB) NATURE

When the woman makes a mistake, her husband should maintain patience and kindness, realizing that some of what may appear as mistakes is probably not so.

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[31] As in Fath ul-Bari.
[32] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and Ahmad.

The woman has a different nature from the man's, and thus may take actions different from what he would.

The Prophet (ﷺ) indicated that the woman (Hawwa' or Eve) was originally created from the man's (Adam's) rib. By nature, the rib is bent. Thus, a woman's nature will never totally coincide with a man's because there is a "bend" between them.

It may be equally true to say that, from a woman's viewpoint, there is a bend in the man's nature, which means that his actions will never completely coincide with hers.

Abu Hurayrah (ؓ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) ordered:

«استوصوا بالنساء خيراً، فإن المرأة خلقت من ضلعٍ أعوجَ،
وإن أعوج شيءٍ في الضِّلَع أعلاه؛ فإذا ذهبتَ تقيمه كسرتَه،
وإن تركتَه لم يزلْ أعوجَ؛ فاستوصوا بالنساء خيراً.»

"Take good care of women, because the woman was created from a bent rib, and the most curved part of a rib is its upper end. If you insist on straightening it, you will break it; and if you leave it, it will remain bent. So take good care of women. "[33]

The reference in this hadith to the rib's upper end seems to point to the head, which houses major human faculties (seeing and hearing) and the tongue that performs the speaking. The head is also the part of the body where the thinking process takes place.

This means that the difference between the man and woman is mostly in their different approach to dealing with issues that require thinking, the way they perceive things, and the way they emotionally react (by laughing, cursing, lying, etc) under different circumstances.

Similarly, Abu Hurayrah (ؓ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) ordered:

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[33] Recorded by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

«من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر، فإذا شهد أمراً فليتكلم
بخيرٍ أو ليسكت، واستوصوا بالنساء، فإن المرأة خلقت من
ضلعٍ، وإن أعوج شيءٍ في الضِّلعِ أعلاه؛ إن ذهبتَ تقيمه
كسرتَه، وإن تركتَه لم يزلْ أعوجَ. استوصوا بالنساء خيراً.»

"He who believes in Allah and the Last Day, when witnessing a matter, should say a good thing or remain silent. Take good care of women, because the woman was created from a rib, and the most curved part of a rib is the top part. So if you insist on straightening it you break it, and if you leave it, it will remain bent. So take good care of women. "[34]

The advice in this report in regard to saying good things confirms what we have pointed out - that the head, being the source of speech, is also the source of difference between the man and woman and is the thing of which they both need to be watchful.

Samurah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن المرأة خلقت من ضلع، وإنّك إن ترد إقامة
الضِّلعِ تكسرْها، فدارِها تعِشْ بها.»

"The woman was created from a rib. If you try to straighten the rib, you would break it. So be kind to her, you would then live in joy with her. "[35]

In this report, the Prophet (ﷺ) describes forcing a woman to change some of her attitudes as the breaking of a rib, and breaking the rib here means divorce. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

[34] Recorded by Muslim.

[35] Recorded by Ahmad. Ibn Hibban. and al-Hakim.Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 1944).

«إن المرأة خُلقت من ضِلع، لن تستقيمَ لكَ على طريقة.
فإن استمتعتَ بها، استمتعت بها وبها عِوَج؛
وإن ذهبتَ تقيمُها كسرتها، وكسرُها طلاقُها.»

"The woman was created from a rib. She will not be straight according to your way. If you want to enjoy her, you will have to enjoy her with her twist. And if you try to straighten her, you would break her: and breaking her is divorcing her. " [36]

LOOKING AT THE WIFE'S BETTER SIDE

We conclude from the above that a man should overlook some of his wife's mistakes - as long as they are not sins. The Prophet (ﷺ) indicated that changing some of a woman's traits is difficult or even impossible.

Just like the man, a woman is not perfect. To enjoy the marriage, the man must forgive and overlook some of his wife's actions that he dislikes. At the same time, he should acknowledge her actions that he likes. Surely, in most cases, her good points will overwhelm the bad ones. Allah (ﷻ) says:

فَإِن كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾

"Even if you dislike them (your wives), perhaps you dislike something in which Allah has placed much good."[37]

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يفرِكنَّ مؤمنٌ مؤمنةً؛ إن كره منها خُلُقاً رضي منها غيرَه.»

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[36] Recorded by Muslim and at-Tirmidhi.
[37] An-Nisa 4: 19.

“Let not a believing man hate a believing woman; if he dislikes one of her traits, he would be pleased by others.” [38]

Dwelling only on the bad side while ignoring the good side is a certain way to destroying the marriage. If men ignore this fact, misery and depression will fill their marriage, and this may lead to divorce.

ENTERTAINING THE WIFE

It is recommended for a man to be playful with his wife and do lawful things that would entertain her and bring joy to her heart. This was the practice of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) with his wives, as is extensively reported by 'A'ishah and other Mothers of the Believers (رضي الله عنهن).

Jabir Bin 'Abdillah and Jabir Bin 'Umayr (رضي الله عنهما) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كل شيء ليس فيه ذكر اللهِ فهو لغو وسهو ولعب، إلا أربعَ خصال: ملاعبةُ الرجلِ آمرأته، وتأديبُ الرجلِ فرسَه، ومشيَه بين الغرضين، وتعليمَ الرجلِ السباحةَ.»

“Everything that does not involve remembrance of Allah is futile, senseless, and wasted - except for four acts: a man entertaining his wife, a man training his horse, a man walking between the two posts (when practicing archery), and teaching swimming to another man. ”[39]

FAIRNESS AND JUSTICE

It is an obligation on the husband, being the chief of the family, to treat his wife and family with fairness and justice. Failing to do so is an indication of his failure in running the family. The husband should not use his material or physical superiority to oppress his wife.

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[38] Recorded by Muslim and Ahmad.

[39] Recorded by an-Nasai. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 4534 and as-Sahihah no. 315).

Coping with Multiple Wives

FAIRNESS IS A CONDITION FOR POLYGAMY

Even though Islam permits marrying up to four wives, it conditions that with justice. Allah says:

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا۟ فِى ٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ فَٱنكِحُوا۟ مَا طَابَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَـٰثَ وَرُبَـٰعَ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا۟ فَوَٰحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَـٰنُكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا۟ ﴿٣﴾

"If you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry whatever pleases you of other women: two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just (with them) then (marry) only one woman, or those that your right hands possess (of captives and slaves). That is better in preventing you from doing injustice. "[40]

Thus, if a man who cannot be fair with multiple wives, he is not allowed to marry more than one. "Fairness" or "justice" here refers to material justice, which includes giving them equal turns, being equitable with them in regard to food, clothing, and dwelling, etc.

EQUAL TURNS

A man with multiple wives is required to give them equal turns. This means spending an equal number of nights with each wife. This rule may not be violated except in three cases:

1. If the husband is going on a journey in which he can only take one wife, he should choose by lot which of his wives will be his companion. This was the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice, as is reported by 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها):

"When the Prophet (ﷺ) intended to go on a journey, he would draw lots among his wives, and would travel with the winner." [41]

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[40] An-Nisa' 4:3.
[41] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

2. One of the wives may choose to give up her turn for another wife, as Sawdah did for 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها). [42]

3. On her wedding, a newly-wed wife gets seven consecutive nights with her husband if she is a virgin, and three consecutive nights if she is not.

Umm Salamah and Anas (رضي الله عنهما) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«للبكر سبعٌ وللثيِّبِ ثلاثٌ.»

"A virgin (bride) gets seven (additional) nights (with her husband), and a non-virgin gets three."[43]

Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) also reported that when the Prophet (ﷺ) married her, he stayed with her for three nights and then said to her:

«ليس بكِ هوانٌ على أهلِكِ. إن شِئتِ سبَّعتُ عندكِ
وسبَّعتُ لنسائي، وإن شئتِ ثلَّثتُ ثم دُرْتُ.»

"You are not to be disgraced before your family. If you wish, I will stay seven nights with you, and then stay seven nights with each of my other wives; or if you wish, having completed three nights with you, I will now give turns."[44]

PUNISHMENT FOR UNFAIRNESS

Unfairness toward multiple wives is an act of oppression that deserves punishment on the Day of Resurrection. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[42] See the biography of Sawdah in Chapter 5.
[43] Recorded by Muslim, Ibn Majah, and others.
[44] Recorded by Muslim, Abu Dawud, and Ibn Majah.

«من كانت له امرأتان، فمال إلى أحدِهما (أو فلم يعدِل بينهما)، جاء يومَ القيامة وشقُّه مائل (أو ساقط).»

"Whoever has two wives and he leans unfairly toward one of them, he will come on the Day of Resurrection with one of his sides dropping."[45]

FAIRNESS DOES NOT INVOLVE FEELINGS OF THE HEART

The required fairness among the wives does not apply to love and affection - which is an uncontrollable inclination of the heart. But even then, Allah (ﷻ) instructs that a man's strong love for one of his wives should not lead him to totally neglect one or more of his other wives:

وَلَن تَسْتَطِيعُوٓا۟ أَن تَعْدِلُوا۟ بَيْنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ ۖ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا۟ كُلَّ ٱلْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوهَا كَٱلْمُعَلَّقَةِ ۚ وَإِن تُصْلِحُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٢٩﴾

"And it will not be within your power to treat your wives with fairness (in affection), even if you should strive to do so. So do not incline completely (toward one) and leave another as if she is suspended (i.e., neither divorced nor attached). And if you amend your affairs and revere Allah, then indeed Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."[46]

Discipline

A leader will inevitably have to deal with the "tough" job of discipline. Discipline is an important process that must be properly implemented. It has its rules and regulations. Violating those rules would undermine or invalidate the whole process, and may result in more damage than good.

The man, being the leader of the family, has the dobligation of enforcing the "family law" for the well-being of the family. The rules of discipline between the

[45] Recorded by Abu Dawud, an-Nasai, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 2017 & Sahih ul-Jami' no. 6515).
[46] An-Nisa 4:129.

man and his wife have been set by Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) in His Book and in His Messenger's (ﷺ) Sunnah.

In the following, Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) mentions four main steps for dealing with a rebellious wife (who insists on violating Allah's commands):

وَٱلَّـٰتِى تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَٱهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِى ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ وَٱضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۖ
فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا۟ عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾ وَإِنْ
خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَٱبْعَثُوا۟ حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِۦ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَآ إِن يُرِيدَآ إِصْلَـٰحًا
يُوَفِّقِ ٱللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

"But those women from whom you fear defiance (first) admonish them; then (if they persist), forsake them in bed; and (finally,) strike them, If they then obey you, seek no means against them. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Great. And if you fear dissension between the two of them, appoint an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from hers. If they both desire reconciliation, Allah will facilitate it between them, Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted. "[47]

ADMONISHMENT

From the above ayah, we see that the first step in discipline is admonishment. One may not go to the next step before performing this step. And admonishment should be conducted earnestly, in a manner satisfying the proper etiquettes of commanding the good and forbidding the wrong.

ABANDONMENT

If admonishment fails and the wife persists in her wrong behavior, the husband may go to the next step, which is abandoning her bed. This is a strong disciplinary action that would normally shake the woman's being and make her realize that her

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[47] An-Nisa 4:34-35.

husband is willing to forsake her bed and charms because of her rebellious behavior, which is often a sufficient reason for her to take heed and comply.

PERMISSION OF HITTING

As we have seen in the above ayah of Surah un-Nisa' (4:34), if the first two steps do not work with the wife and she continues to be disobedient and rebellious, the husband may resort to hitting her.

However, hitting has restrictions: it should not be painful, should not leave marks on the body, and should avoid the face, head, and abdomen. 'Arnr Bin al-Ahwas al-Jushami: (ؓ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ألا واستوصوا بالنساء خيراً، فإنهن عوانٍ عندكم، ليس تملكون منهن شيئاً غير ذلك، إلا أن يأتين بفاحشة مبينة. فإن فعلن فاهجروهن في المضاجع، واضربوهن ضرباً غير مبرِّح، فإن أطعنكم فلا تبغوا عليهن سبيلاً.»

"Lo! Take good care of women, for they surely are captives under your charge, and you do not possess of them any more than this (subordination) - unless they commit a manifest sin. If they do, abandon them in sleep, and beat them lightly. If they obey you, do not apply any further punishment. "[48]

'Ata' (ؒ) reported that he asked Ibn 'Abbas (ؓ), "What is 'light hitting'?" He replied, "It is to hit with a siwak[49] stick or something like it."[50]

One may ask, "What is the benefit of light hitting?" The answer is that a woman normally has a sensitive nature; the slightest show of discourtesy to her would tremendously affect her and cause her to rethink her actions. If, on the other hand, light hitting does not work with her, brutal hitting won't.

We should keep in mind that the purpose of hitting is to correct and remind, and not to avenge or harm.

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[48] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasai, and Ibn Majah. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7880 & Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 2030).

[49] Siwak or miswak A thin and short stick (usually about 6 inches or 20 cm long). cut from the roots of a desert tree called arak, and used to clean the teeth.

[50] Al-Qurtubi's "Al-Jami' li-Ahkam il-Quran" 5:172.

DISAPPROVAL OF HITTING

Even though a man is allowed to hit his wife in certain situations, hitting her is disliked in Islam and is considered the resort of the helpless. Iyas Bin 'Abdillah ad-Dawsi (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تضربوا إماءَ اللهِ.»

"Do not hit Allah's female slaves (i.e., the women) "

Our Prophet and example (ﷺ), never hit any of his wives.

'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

"ما ضَرَبَ رَسولُ اللهِ بيده امرأةً قط، ولا خادماً،
ولا ضربَ شيئاً، إلا أن يجاهدَ في سبيل الله."

"Never did Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) hit with his hand a women, a servant, or anyone else - except during fighting for Allah's cause."[51]

It is inconceivable how a man could harshly hit his wife and then expect her to render intimate pleasures to him! 'Abdullah Bin Zam'ah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يعمَدُ أحدُكم فيجلِدَ امرأتَه جَلْدَ البعير، ولعله يضاجعُها في آخر يومه.»

"How could) one of you turn to his wife and whip her like whipping a camel and then make love to her at the end of the day!? "[52]

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[51] Recorded by Muslim and others.
[52] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

Many husbands abuse their wives and justify this by the texts that command the wife to obey the husband or that allow him to discipline her. Those husbands must understand that discipline is a well-regulated matter in Islam, and has no room for abuse. An abusive husband is indeed an oppressor, and what we have mentioned regarding oppressors applies to him. Furthermore, an abused wife has the full right to turn to justice and seek punishment of her abusive husband.

DIVORCE

We have seen above that the last step in the discipline process is arbitration. If that does not work, nothing would be left but divorce.

Divorce is a right for the husband. But it is his obligation to apply it in the right measure and when the necessity arises.

<u>THE WIFE'S OBLIGATIONS</u>

The Great Right of the Husband

THE MAN'S DEGREE OVER THE WOMAN

Allah (ﷻ) has appointed the man as the usual head of the family:

ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعۡضَهُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٖ وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُواْ مِنۡ
أَمۡوَٰلِهِمۡۚ فَٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ قَٰنِتَٰتٌ حَٰفِظَٰتٞ لِّلۡغَيۡبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ ٱللَّهُۚ وَٱلَّٰتِي تَخَافُونَ
نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَٱهۡجُرُوهُنَّ فِي ٱلۡمَضَاجِعِ وَٱضۡرِبُوهُنَّۖ فَإِنۡ أَطَعۡنَكُمۡ
فَلَا تَبۡغُواْ عَلَيۡهِنَّ سَبِيلًاۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيّٗا كَبِيرٗا ﴿٣٤﴾

"Men are in charge of women by (right of) what (qualities) Allah has given one over the other and what they spend (in support) from their wealth, So, righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah), guarding in (their husband's) absence what Allah commands them to guard (their husband's honor, property, secrets, etc.) But those women from whom you fear defiance - first admonish them; then (if they persist), forsake them in bed; and (as a last resort,) strike them, But if they obey you, seek no means against them, Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Great," [1]

Ibn Kathir (رحمه الله) commented on this, "The man is the woman's custodian; he is her supervisor, chief, leader, and the one who corrects her if she deviates."

This gives the man a major responsibility in running the family, and qualifies him for a number of rights - which should be rendered to him by the other family members and, above all, his wife. This is the "degree" or "edge" over the woman that Allah assigned to the man, as He (ﷻ) says:

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[1] An-Nisa 4:34.

ۚ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٨﴾

"And due to them (the wives) is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men have a degree over them (in responsibility and authority). Allah is Mighty and Wise. "[2]

It must be understood that this degree is a degree of responsibility before being a degree of homage. The man earns it by being truly worthy of the trust that Allah (ﷻ) conferred on him, and loses it by neglecting this trust.

SUBMISSION TO THE HUSBAND'S AUTHORITY

As we discussed above, Allah (ﷻ) has divided the responsibilities and duties within the family, and has set the man as the one in authority. The woman should not reject or challenge that authority. Rather, she should accept it in fulfillment of Allah's commands. She should view her submission to her husband's authority as a submission to Allah's decree. This submission should almost reach the degree of prostrating to her husband. 'Aishah, Abu Hurayrah, Mu'ath, and Buraydah (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لو كنت آمراً أحداً أن يسجُد لأحدٍ لأمرتُ المرأةَ أن تسجُدَ لزوجها.»

"Were I to order a person to prostrate before another person, I would have ordered the woman to prostrate before her husband." [3]

As stated above, a woman's obedience to her husband is part of her obedience to Allah (ﷻ). Therefore, giving him his rights is part of fulfilling Allah's rights.

ABSOLUTE WILLINGNESS TO SERVE AND COOPERATE

The woman should demonstrate her acceptance of her husband's authority by showing willingness to serve him to her best ability. Mu'ath Bin Jabal (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[2] Al-Baqarah 2:228.

[3] Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Ahmad, al-Hakim, and Ibn Majah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Irwa'ul-Ghalil no. 1998 and Sahih ul-Jami' no. 5239, 5294).

«لو تعلم المرأةُ حق الزوج لم تقعد ما حضَرَ غداؤه وعشاؤه حتى يفرُغ منه.»

"If a woman knew her husband's right, she would not sit while he is eating his dinner or supper until he finishes eating." [4]

IS THE HUSBAND BETTER?

One may wonder, "What is so great about the husband that the woman is required to perform heroic or impossible acts to please him?" In answering this question, we have to understand the following principles:

1. The rights granted to the husband are necessary for the peaceful and productive running of the family.

2. The above hadiths refer to a man who fulfills all of his responsibilities as husband and family-head. He constantly offers to his wife and children guidance, protection, support, nurturing, and so on. Neglecting any of that would proportionally reduce his rights upon his wife.

3. When the husband fulfills his responsibilities toward his wife as outlined above, he becomes a true benefactor who deserves her full gratitude and support.

Therefore, the husband's rights do not necessarily mean that he is better than the wife. He is of no higher status or of a better species. Both of them descend from Adam (عليه السلام), and Adam was made from dirt. Piety and righteousness are what determines who is truly better than the other. His rights are set by Allah to guarantee the well-being and success of their relationship and their family. Even though the wife is normally subordinate to her husband in the family structure, she may be far better than him in Allah's sight, especially when she fulfills her obligations in a way tl1at is pleasing to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).

Kindness Toward the Husband

Part of a woman's fulfillment of her husband's rights is to treat him in a good and honorable way, and to avoid harming him.

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[4] Recorded by at-Tabarani and al-Bazzar. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 5259).

SHOWING GRATITUDE

As we have discussed above, the husband normally has many favors upon his wife. These favors are not limited to the financial privilege which, even though it is usually true, is not always the case. A woman should show gratitude to her husband and should return his favors in the form of kindness and good treatment.

A great example is Khadijah (رضي الله عنها), who was wealthier than the Prophet (ﷺ). Her financial advantage, though, did not make her arrogant or ungrateful to her husband. Rather, she was a great example of modesty and kindness that the Prophet (ﷺ) continued to remember all his life.

A woman who is reluctant to admit her husband's favors displeases her Lord (سبحانه وتعالى), even before she displeases her husband. 'Abdullah Bin 'Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا ينظرُ اللهُ إلى امرأةٍ لا تشكرُ لزوجها، وهي لا تستغني عنه.»

"Allah does not look (with mercy) at a woman who is not grateful to her husband when she cannot live without him." [5]

'Abdullah Bin 'Umar, Abu Hurayrah, and Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said to the women:

«يا معشرَ النِّساءِ! تصدَّقنَ وأكثِرنَ من الاستغفارِ، فإني رأيتُكُنَّ
أكثرَ أهلِ النارِ: إنكُنَّ تُكثِرنَ اللعنَ، وتكفُرنَ العشيرَ.»

"O women! Give charity and ask for Allah's forgiveness abundantly, for 1 have seen you (women) to be the majority of the Fire's people. (That is because) you frequently curse, and you are ungrateful to your husbands. " [6]

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[5] Recorded by an-Nasai (in al-Kubra) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 289).

[6] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

KINDNESS TO THE HUSBAND IS AN ACT OF WORSHIP

The woman's treatment of her husband could be her passport to Jannah (or to the hellfire).

Husayn Bin Mihsan (ﷺ) reported that one of his paternal aunts visited the Prophet (ﷺ). He asked her, **"O Woman, do yon have a husband?"** She replied, "Yes." He asked, **"How do you treat him?"** She replied, "As much as I can, I do not deny him any request." He (ﷺ) said:

«فأنظري أين أنتِ منه، فإنما هو جنتُكِ ونارُكِ.»

"Check then what is your position with him, because he is either your (way to) Jannah or the Fire." [7]

THE BEST OF WOMEN

The best of women is she who is good and kind to her husband. Abu Uthaynah as-Sadafi (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خيرُ نسائكم الولود الودود، المُواسيةُ المُواتِيةُ، إذا اتَّقَينَ الله. وشر نسائكم المتبرّجاتُ المتخيِّلاتُ، وهن المنافقات. لا يدخل الجنةَ منهنّ إلا مثلُ الغراب الأعصمِ.»

"The best of your women are those who are bearers of many children, loving (to their husbands), comforting, and tolerant - provided that they have taqwa of Allah. And the worst of your women are those who display their charms and swagger in their walk those are hypocrites indeed. None of them (the women) will enter Jannah except (as rarely) as are the crows that have red beaks and legs. " [8]

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[7] Recorded by Ahmad, al-Hakim, and others. Verified to be hasan by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 1509).

[8] Recorded by al-Bayhaqi. (in as-Sunan) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3330 & as- Sahihah no. 1849). The last part of it (about the crow) is also recorded

PROHIBITION OF HARMING THE HUSBAND

A woman who harms her husband receives curses from the women of Jannah. That is an indication of Allah's displeasure with her.

Mu'ath Bin Jabal (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تؤذي ٱمرأة زوجها في الدنيا إلا قالت زوجتُه من الحور العين:
"لا تؤذيه قاتلك ٱللهُ، فإنما هو عندكِ دخيلٌ يوشك أن يفارقكِ إلينا."»

"Whenever a woman harms her (righteous) husband in the worldly life, his (future) wife from al-hur ul-in (the wide-eyed beauties of Jannah) says, "Do not harm him, may Allah fight you! He is only staying temporarily with you, and will soon come to us. " [9]

Obeying the Husband

Indeed, obeying the husband is an obligation on the women in Islam; it is an act of worship that she presents to Allah (ﷻ) alone, only seeking his pleasure and acceptance. We have seen numerous texts instructing the woman to obey her husband and cooperate well with him in maintaining the family. There are other texts that are even more explicit in this regard.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا صلتِ المرأةُ خمسَها، وصامَت شهرَها، وحَصنَت فرجَها، وأطاعت
زوجَها، قيل لها: "ٱدخلي الجنةَ من أي أبوابِ الجنةِ شئتِ."»

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by Ahmad and others from 'Arm Bin al-'As (رضي الله عنه) and verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 1850).

[9] Recorded by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani(Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7192 & as-Sahihah no. 173).

“When a woman prays her five (prayers), fasts her month (Ramadan), preserves her chastity, and obeys her husband, she will be told (on the Day of Judgment), "Enter Jannah from any of its (eight) gates.” [10]

On the other hand, disobeying the husband is a great sin that could cause the prayers to be unacceptable by Allah. Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«اثنان لا تُجاوزُ صلاتُهما رؤوسَهُما: عبدٌ آبقٌ من مَواليه حتى يرجِعَ، وامرأةٌ عصت زوجها حتى ترجعَ.»

“There are two individuals whose prayer does not rise above their heads: a slave running away from his masters - until he returns to them, and a woman who disobeys her husband - until she returns (to obedience). ” [11]

SERVING THE HUSBAND

Part of a wife's obedience to her husband is to serve him to her best ability. That includes performing the daily chores, serving his food, and so on. We again site the hadith reported by Mu'ath Bin Jabal (رضي الله عنه) that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لو تعلم المرأةُ حق الزوج لم تقعد ما حضرَ غداؤه وعشاؤه حتى يفرُغ منه.»

“If a woman knew her husband's right, she would not sit while he is eating his dinner or supper until he finishes eating.” [12]

No woman is exempt from this responsibility - unless her husband elects to relieve her.

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[10] Recorded by Ibn Hibban. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 660 and Adab uz-Zafaf p. 286).

[11] Recorded by al-Hakim and at-Tabarani. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami‘ no. 136 & as- Sahihah no. 288).

[12] Recorded by at-Tabarani and al-Bazzar. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami‘ no. 5259).

Ibn Qayyim noted, "The wife's serving of her husband is a matter about which there is no doubt. It is not correct to differentiate in this regard between a noble and a low class woman, or between a poor and a rich one. The most noble of all women (Fatimah) used to serve her husband. She came complaining to her father (ﷺ) about the hardship she was facing in this regard, but he did not grant her wish."[13]

GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE

There are some important guidelines that must be emphasized in regard to the subject of obedience. The following has mostly been presented in the previous sections or chapters, but we include it here for easy reference.

1. By obeying her husband, a woman would be obeying Allah (ﷻ) because He required this from her.

2. The women should obey her husband as long as obeying him is within her capacity.

3. The husband should only be obeyed in matters that do not involve disobeying Allah (ﷻ).

Doing Things That Please Her Husband

As part of her kindness toward her husband, the woman should do her best to please him - making sure that what she does is not displeasing to Allah (ﷻ).

PLEASING HIM WITH HER APPEARANCE

A good woman attempts to please her husband with her appearance. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خير النساءِ التي تسُره إذا نظر، وتطيعه إذا أمر،
ولا تُخَالِفُه في نفسِها ولا مالِها بما يكره.»

[13] Zad ul-Ma'ad 5:160.

"The best of women is that who pleases him (i.e. her husband) when he looks at her, obeys him when he orders, and does not subject her person or money to what he dislikes." [14]

Similarly, 'Abdullah Bin Salam (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was asked, "Who are the best of women?" He replied:

«خيرُ النساء من تسُرُكَ إذا أبصَرتَ، وتطيعُكَ
إذا أمرتَ، وتحفظُ غيبتَكَ في نفسِها ومالِكَ.»

"The best of women is that who pleases you when you look at her, obeys you when you order her, and safeguards you during your absence in regard to herself and your wealth." [15]

It is important to emphasize here that "pleasing" the husband can only be in a way conforming with Islam, which means that she would not appear or act in a way displeasing to Allah. The highest form of "pleasing" is realized by being a model practicing Muslim woman: her hijab, modesty, and virtue would all bring great joy and pleasure into a true believer's heart and soul.

ADMITTING PEOPLE ONLY WITH HIS PERMISSION

A woman should not allow anyone into her husband's house without his consent. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يحل لامرأة أن تصومَ وزوجها شاهد إلا بإذنِهِ
-إلا رمضانَ- ولا تأذنَ في بيته إلا بإذنه.»

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[14] Recorded by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, and al-Hakim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3298 & as-Sahihah no. 1838).

[15] Recorded by at-Tabarani (in al-Kabir) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 3299 & as-Sahihah no. 1838).

"It is not permissible for a woman to fast, while her husband is present, without his permission - except for Ramadan. Nor is it permissible for her to admit anyone to his house except with his permission. " [16]

The husband's consent could be implicit. For instance, if a woman is certain that her husband does not object to some of the neighboring women visiting her, she does not have to ask him for a specific permission every time one of them comes to visit her.

AVOIDING ASKING FOR DIVORCE WITHOUT REASON

A righteous woman would not ask her husband for divorce without a good reason. Only if she finds that he is causing her a real harm in her faith or well-being would she be justified to seek divorce. The Prophet (ﷺ) warned that the women who ask for divorce without a sound reason would be liable to punishment, and may not enter into Jannah.

Thawban (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أيما امرأةٍ سألت زوجَها الطلاقَ من غير بأسٍ، فحرامٌ عليها رائحة الجنة.»

"Any woman who asks her husband for divorce without a (serious) reason, the fragrance of Jannah will be prohibited for her." [17]

Asking the husband for divorce demonstrates ungratefulness, and undermines the husband's authority and efforts toward his wife. It is a blow in his face that is not allowed in Islam without a valid excuse.

A MOTHER'S ADVICE TO HER DAUGHTER

The following is an advice from a Jahili mother to her daughter on her wedding day. It reflects a great and mature experience, and concisely puts in a nutshell the most important actions that a woman should consider in order to please her husband.

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[16] Recorded by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

[17] Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud. and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2706 & Irwa' ul-Ghalil no. 2035).

Umm Ayas Bint 'Awf Bin Muslim ash-Shaybani was given in marriage to 'Amr Bin Hijr, the king of Kindah [18]. Shortly before her wedding, her mother Umamah Bint al-Harith took her aside and told her:

"O my daughter! If the advice were to be left off the virtuous and well-mannered, you would be in no need of advice. However, the advice reminds the forgetful and guides the wise. And if a woman were to forsake marriage because of her parents' wealth or their fondness of her, you would be in least need for marriage. However, the women have been made for the men, and for them were the men made.

O my daughter! You are now departing from the climate where you lived, and the nest where you grew, to an unfamiliar domicile and companion. By virtue of you husband's custody, he is now a watcher and master over you. So be a maid to him, and he will surely be your servant. Be his earth (in submission), and he will be your sky (in protection). Preserve for him ten qualities, and they will be a treasure for you:

1. Submit to him by showing contentment (in regard to what he gives you).

2. Listen to him and obey him in the best manner.

3. Guard where his eye looks, so that it will not fall on anything ugly from you.

4. Guard what his nose smells, so that he will not smell from you but the best aroma.

5. Respect his meal times, for the attack of hunger is a cause for rage.

6. Respect his sleep times, for the disturbance of sleep is a cause of annoyance.

7. Safeguard his wealth by employing good judgment.

8. Care for his children and servants by employing good planning.

9. Do not disobey any of his commands, for if you do, you would bring resentment into his breast.

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[18] A Yamani tribe.

10. Do not disclose any of his secrets, for if you do, you would not be secure from his revenge.

Furthermore, do not display joy when he is worried, nor sadness when he is happy, for this will breed hatred. And remember, my daughter, that the more you please him, the more he honors you. And remember that you will not attain what you desire from him unless you give preference to his likes over yours. " [19]

Fulfilling the Husband's Physical Desire

A MAJOR OBLIGATION

Chastity is a main objective of marriage. A man preserves his chastity by turning his lust toward his wife instead of directing it toward prohibited outlets. It is therefore a great obligation upon tl1e wife to be always willing to help her husband in venting his desire; and it is a major sin for her to deny her husband the intimate pleasure that he seeks with her.

'Abdullah Bin Abi Awfa (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«والذي نفس محمدٍ بيده، لا تؤدي المرأةُ حق ربِّها حتى تؤدي حق زوجِها كلَّه، حتى لو سألها نفسَها وهي على قَتَبٍ لم تمنعْه نفسَها.»

"By the One that Muhammad's soul is in His hand, a woman would not truly fulfill the right of her Lord (Allah) until she fulfills all of her husband's right even if he was to ask her for herself while she is in a camel's saddle, she should not deny him that." [20]

From the above Hadith, we see that the wife should not hesitate in answering her husband's call, even if that would cause an inconvenience. Similarly, Zayd Bin Arqam (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

[19] Recorded in al-Aghani by al-Asbahani (partially included in Tuhfat ul-'Arus, pp. 9192).
[20] Recorded by Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Adab uz-Zifaf p. 84).

«إذا دعا الرجلُ ٱمرأته إلى فراشه فلتُجِب، وإن كانت على ظهر قَتَب.»

“When a man invites his wife to his bed, she should respond to him, even if she was sitting in a camel's saddle.” [21]

Talq Bin 'All (ؓ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا دعا الرجلُ زوجَتَه لحاجته فلتأته، وإن كانت على التنور.»

“When a man invites his wife for his (sexual) need, she should go to him, even if she was working at the outdoor oven.” [22]

DENIAL OF INTIMATE PLEASURE IS A MAJOR SIN

Since it is a major obligation upon the wife to fulfill her husband's desire, refusing to do so is a major sin that deserves the angels' curse and Allah's wrath. Abu Hurayrah (ؓ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إذا دعا الرجل ٱمرأته إلى فراشه، فأبت (فلم تأته)، فبات
غضبان عليها، لعنتها الملائكة حتى تصبح (أو يرضى عنها).»

“If a man invites his wife to bed and she refuses to come and he sleeps while angry, the angels curse her till the morning.” [23]

NO VOLUNTARY FASTING WITHOUT HIS PERMISSION

Since the wife should be ready and willing to fulfill her husband's desire, she is not allowed to fast voluntarily without his permission. The reason for this

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[21] Recorded by al-Bazzar and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 1203 & Sahih ul-Jami' no. 533).
[22] Recorded by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 1202 & Sahih ul-Jami' no. 534).
[23] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

prohibition is that her "voluntary" fasting could interfere with her "obligatory" fulfillment of his desire.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تصمِ المرأةُ وبعلها شاهدٌ إلا بإذنه، غير رمضان؛ ولا تأذنْ في بيته وهو شاهدٌ إلا بإذنه؛ وما أنفقت من كسبه من غير أمرِه فإن نصفَ أجرِه له.»

"If her husband is present, a woman may not fast without his permission - except for Ramadan. And if he is present, she may not admit anyone into his house without his permission. And he will surely receive half of the reward for whatever she spends of his earning without his permission. " [24]

MODERATENESS IN WORSHIP

Similar to fasting, a wife should avoid performing excessive worship that may interfere with her obligation toward her husband.

Avoiding Suspicious Situations with Other Men

The married life is based on trust. Depending on her conduct, the wife can be a source of honor or depravity for the whole family. In order to maintain her husband's trust and safeguard his honor, she must avoid all situations that may cause suspicion to him or to other people.

AVOIDING DISPLAYING HER CHARMS TO OTHER MEN

A woman should be modest and plain in her appearance, avoiding everything that could attract the men's eyes or give them evil thoughts.

Fudalah Bin 'Ubayd (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[24] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

«ثلاثةٌ لا تسأل عنهم: رجلٌ فارق الجماعةَ وعصى إمامه ومات عاصياً، وأمةٌ أو عبدٌ أبقَ من سيده فمات، وأمرأةٌ غاب عنها زوجُها وقد كفاها مؤنَةَ الدنيا فتبرّجت بعده؛ فلا تسأل عنهم.»

"There are three (types of) individuals that you need not ask about (because they are doomed): a man who departs from the Jama'ah, disobeys his imam (ruler), and dies in a state of disobedience; a female or male slave who runs away from his master and dies in that (fugitive) state; and a woman that, when her husband is absent - even though he had sufficed her from all worldly worries - she adorns herself in his absence (to other men). So, you need not ask about those. " [25]

AVOIDING UNNECESSARY TALK WITH OTHER MEN

A woman should not talk to men without her husband's permission (whether explicit or implicit). Even then, her talking with other men should be limited, formal, and to the point.

'Amr Bin al-'As (ﷺ) reported:

"نهى أن تُكلَّمَ النساءُ إلا بإذن أزواجهن."

"The Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited speaking to woman without their husbands' permission." [26]

AVOIDING PRIVACY WITH OTHER MEN

The woman may not be alone in a private place with a man who is neither her husband nor her mahram.

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[25] Recorded by al-Bukhari (in al-Adab al-Mufrad) and al-Hakim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami‘ no. 3058 & as-Sahihah no. 542).

[26] Recorded by at-Tabarani (in al-Kabir). Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 6813 & as-Sahihah no. 652).

Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يدخلنّ رجلٌ بعد يومي هذا على مُغَيَّبةٍ إلا ومعه رجلٌ أو اثنان.»

"Let no man enter, after this day, to the privacy of a woman unless he has with him one or two other men." [27]

Ibn 'Abbas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تسافر المرأة إلا مع ذي محرم، ولا يدخل عليها رجل إلا معها محرم.»

"A woman may not travel except with a mahram. And no (unrelated) man may come into her presence unless she has a mahram with her." [28]

AVOIDING TRAVELING WITHOUT MAHRAMS

A woman may not travel without a mahram. In the state of travel, a person is weaker and more liable to attacks and temptations - even in today's modernized travel. Therefore, a woman must have a man with her to protect and help her.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يحل لامرأة أن تسافرَ إلا ومعها ذو محرم منها.»

"It is not permissible for a woman to travel except in the company of a mahram." [29]

And Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تسافرُ المرأةُ بريداً إلا ومعها محرم يحْرُمُ عليها.»

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[27] Recorded by Muslim and Ahmad.
[28] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.
[29] Recorded by Muslim.

"It is not permissible for a woman to travel the distance of a barid (one mailing station) [30] except in the company of a mahram who is prohibited for her (to marry)." [31]

AVOIDING UNDRESSING OUTSIDE HER HOME

A woman should not undress outside her home. Some women had the practice of undressing and taking a bath in public facilities for females. The Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited that and indicated that a woman who does it would not deserve Allah's cover and protection.

Abu al-Malih al-Huthali (رضي الله عنه) reported that some women from Hims [32] visited 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها). She asked them, "Are you from the people who allow their women to go to public baths?" They replied, "Yes." She then said that she heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«أيما امرأةٍ وضعت ثيابها في غير بيت زوجها،
فقد هتكت سترَ ما بينها وبين اللهِ عز وجل.»

"Any woman who takes off her clothes in other than her husband's house has indeed broken off the veil between herself and Allah (سبحانه وتعالى)."[33]

Similarly, Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أيما امرأة نزعت ثيابها في غير بيتها، خرق اللهُ عز وجل عنها سِتره.»

"Any woman who takes off her clothes in other than her husband's house, Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) will then remove His cover off her." [34]

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[30] Ibn Khuzaymah defined this as 12 Hashimi miles. Each Hashimi mile is 4000 arm spans (60 cm), or 2.4 km, or 1.5 mi. Thus, a barid is about 18 English miles.

[31] Recorded by Abu Dawud, al-Hakim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7302 & as-Sahihah no. 2421).

[32] A Shami town north of Damascus

[33] Recorded by Ahmad, at-Tirmithi, Ibn Majah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2710).

[34] Recorded by Ahmad, al-Hakim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 2708).

The above hadiths also apply to a woman who undresses in public fitting rooms or in any place where there is any chance for men or women to see parts of her body that only her husband may see.

AVOIDING GOING OUT OF THE HOUSE WITHOUT REASON

In general, the woman's normal abode is her home. It is the arena of her important duties and successful performance. It provides her with protection and security, and keeps her away from suspicious situations. A Muslim woman would not go in and out of her home without necessity. She would shy away from any place where she may chance mixing with men or being in their close proximity. Allah advises the Mothers of the Believers, as well as all other Muslim women, by saying:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ۖ

"And abide in your homes and do not display yourselves as was the display of the former times of Jahiliyyah." [35]

Financial Responsibility

We have seen in Module Nine that the wife shares the responsibility of her home's financial well-being.

SAFEGUARDING HIS POSSESSIONS

A major right for the man on his wife is that she safeguards his property in his absence. Allah (ﷻ) says:

فَٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ قَٰنِتَٰتٌ حَٰفِظَٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ

"So, righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah), guarding in (their husband's) absence what Allah commands them to guard (their husband's honor, property, secrets, etc."[36]

[35] Al-Ahzab 33:33.
[36] An-Nisa 4:34.

SPENDING WITH HIS PERMISSION

A woman may not dispense any of her husband's possessions without his permission or implicit consent (i.e., if she is sure that he would not mind) - not even charity. 'Abdullah Bin 'Amr (ؓ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يجوز لامرأة عطيّةٌ إلا أن يأذنَ زوجُها.»

"It is not permissible for a woman to give a donation unless her husband allows that." [37]

FOOD IS PART OF THE TRUST

Food is part of the woman's trust that she should not dispense without her husband's permission. Abu Umamah al-Bahili (ؓ) and others reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said in a speech during his Farewell Pilgrimage:

«إن اللهَ قد أعطى كل ذي حق حقه، فلا وصيةَ لوارث.
ولا تنفقُ المرأةُ شيئاً من بيتها إلا بإذن زوجها.»

"Allah has appointed for everyone his due right; thus no bequest may be made to a (standard) heir. And a woman may not spend anything from her house without her husband's permission. "

Someone asked, "O Allah's Messenger! Not even food?" He replied, **"That is our best type of wealth."** [38]

A SHARED REWARD

If a woman gives charity from her husband's money, knowing that he would not object to that, she would get half of the reward and he the other half.

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[37] Recorded by Abu Dawud. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7626 & as-Sahihah no. 825).

[38] Recorded by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih Abi Dawud no. 3044).

Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أنفقت المرأةُ من كسب زوجها من غير أمره فله نصفُ الأجرِ.»

"When a woman gives charity from her husband's earnings, without his instruction, he gets half of the reward." [39]

'A'ishah (ﷺ) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أنفقت المرأةُ من طعام بيتها غير مُفسدةٍ، كان لها أجرُها بما أنفقت، ولزوجها أجرُه بما اكتسب.»

"When a women gives away (as charity) from her home's food, without causing harm (to the family), she earns her reward because of her spending, and her husband earns his reward because he provided (the food)." [40]

USE OF HER OWN MONEY

Islam gives the woman full right to ownership, and her husband has no right to take any of her possessions (including her jewelry, dowry, clothing, etc.) without her permission. However, in order to maintain the harmony of the family and proper order within it - the husband being leader and the woman follower, some restrictions are placed on the woman's manner of spending of her own money.

If a woman would have the freedom of spending of her money at will and without reference to her husband, conflicts would soon arise when her spending interferes with some of her husband's decisions, thus undermining his authority. A simple example would be a case where the husband decides not to buy a car for his teenage son, but the wife interferes saying, "I will buy him one from my own money."

Therefore, Allah (ﷻ), the most Wise, has decreed that a woman may not spend of her own money without her husband's permission (or implicit consent).

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[39] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.
[40] Recorded by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

'Abdullah Bin 'Amr and Ka'b Bin Malik (رضي الله عنهما) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تجوز لامرأةٍ هبةٌ في مالها إلا بإذن زوجها – إذا ملك زوجُها عِصمتَها.»

"It is not permissible for a woman to donate of her money except with her husband's consent - once her husband gains charge of her (at marriage)." [41]

'Abdullah Bin 'Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يجوز لامرأةٍ أمرٌ في مالها – إذا ملك زوجُها عِصمتَها.»

"It is not permissible for a woman to (independently) spend of her money - once her husband gains charge of her (at marriage)." [42]

Wathilah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ليس للمرأة أن تنتهك شيئاً من مالها إلا بإذن زوجها.»

"It is not permissible for a woman to spend of her money except with her husband's permission." [43]

ISLAM VS UN-ISLAMIC LAWS

An important note is due here concerning Muslims living in non-Islamic countries. Regardless of which one of the two spouses paid for a house or other major purchases, the laws of countries like the United States impose that the ownership is shared equally between the two spouses. This is unfair, and it is prohibited for anyone to take that which is not his own,

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[41] Recorded by Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7238).

[42] Recorded by Abu Dawud and al-Hakim, Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 7625 & as-Sahihah no. 825).

[43] Recorded by at-Tabarani (in al-Kabir) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami' no. 5424 & as-Sahihah no. 775).

Thus, if a woman is given half of her husband's property when he dies or if he divorces her, she should not think that she has a right for it. Rather, she must seek her true Islamic share and give up anything beyond that, remembering the Day when she will stand before Allah (ﷻ) and He will judge justly between her and all those against whom she had transgressed.

Avoiding Pretense and False Claims

Women often like to show-off what they have or pretend owning things that they do not. This is a form of lying that is prohibited in Islam. A righteous woman is like a clear mirror that reflects a good picture.

Asma' (رضي الله عنها) reported that a woman said, “O Allah's Messenger, I have a co-wife. Is it wrong for me to pretend having things other than what my husband gave me (to tease her)?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«المتشبع بما لم يُعْطَ كلابسِ ثوبي زورٍ.»

“A person who pretends to have that which he does not is like one who wears two garments of deception. ” [44]

Tending the Children

Tending the children is a shared responsibility between the two spouses. However, it is more emphasized for the wife because she normally spends more time with the children and is in position to exercise more supervision and guidance with them.

RAISING HER CHILDREN ACCORDING TO ISLAM

The children are the greatest fruit of marriage. They are a standing demonstration of its success or failure. Guarding the children from all harm and raising them upon the good Islamic teaching is the only sure protection from Satan and the hellfire. Allah (ﷻ) says:

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[44] Recorded by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا

مَلَـٰٓئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

"O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones. Appointed over it are angels who are harsh and severe. They do not disobey Allah in what he commands them but do what they are commanded. " [45]

Tending her children is one of the woman's greatest responsibilities. Fulfilling it brings pleasure and happiness to her heart and her husband's. She should seriously handle this responsibility and never abandon it for the sake of earning some trivial money outside the home or watching some worthless shows on the television.

BREAST-FEEDING THE CHILDREN

A woman has the obligation of breast feeding her children up to two complete years. Allah (ﷻ) says:

۞ وَٱلْوَٰلِدَٰتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَـٰدَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ ۖ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يُتِمَّ ٱلرَّضَاعَةَ ۚ

"Mothers should nurse their children two complete years - for whoever desires to complete the nursing term."[46]

A woman may not forsake this important obligation unless she has an Islamically acceptable excuse, such as a genuine medical problem. Women who deny their children their nursing rights are liable to punishment in the grave and in the Hereafter.

Abu Umamah al-Bahili (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[45] At-Tahrim 66:6.
[46] Al-Baqarah 2:233.

«بينما أنا نائم إذ أتاني رجُلان، فأخذا بضَبْعَيَّ، فأتيا بي جبلاً وعراً،
فقالا: "اْصعد." فقلت: "إني لا أُطيقُه." فقالا: "سنُسهّلُه لك."»

“While I was sleeping, two men (angels) came to me, held my upper arms, and took me to a rocky mountain. They said, "Climb." I said, "I cannot climb it." They said, "We will make it easy for you.”

He (ﷺ) continued:

«فصعدتُ، حتى إذا كنتُ في سواء الجبل، إذا بأصواتٍ شديدة.
قلت: "ما هذه الأصوات؟" قالوا: "هذا عِواءُ أهلِ النَّار."»

“So I ascended until I reached a high place in the mountain. I heard fierce cries and asked, "What are those cries?" They replied, "That is the howling of the people of the Fire.”

He (ﷺ) continued:

«ثم انطُلِقَ بي، فإذا أنا بقومٍ معلقين بعراقيبهم، مشققةٌ أشداقُهم،
تسيل أشداقُهم دماً، قلت: "من هؤلاء؟" قال: "هؤلاء الذين يُفطِرون
قبل تحلّةِ صومهم."»

“We moved on until I saw people who were suspended from their Achilles' tendons, their cheeks cut and gushing blood. I asked, "Who are these?" They replied, "These are the ones who break their fast before it is permissible.”

He (ﷺ) continued:

«ثُم ٱنطُلقَ بي، فإذا بقومٍ أشدّ شيءٍ ٱنتفاخاً، وأنتَنَه ريحاً، وأسوأه منظراً. فقلتُ: "من هٰؤلاء؟" فقال: "هٰؤلاءِ قتلى الكفّار."»

“We moved on until I saw people who were awfully swollen, and had the most foul stench and the most hideous appearance. I asked, "Who are these?" They replied, "These are the disbelievers who have died (on the battlefield).”

He (ﷺ) continued:

«ثُم ٱنطُلقَ بي، فإذا بقومٍ أشدّ شيءٍ ٱنتفاخاً، وأنتَنَه ريحاً، كأنّ ريحَهُمُ المراحيضُ، قلت: "من هٰؤلاء؟" قال: "هٰؤلاء الزانونَ والزواني."»

“We moved on until I saw people who were awfully swollen, and had the most foul stench - their stench was like that of gutters. I asked, "Who are these?" They replied, "These are the male and female adulterers.”

He (ﷺ) continued:

«ثُم ٱنطُلقَ بي، فإذا أنا بنساءٍ تنهش ثديَهُنّ الحيّاتُ. قلت: "ما بالُ هٰؤلاء؟" قال: "هٰؤلاء يمنعنَ أولادَهُنّ ألبانَهُنّ."»

“We moved on until I saw women with snakes biting at their breasts. I asked, "What is wrong with these?" They replied, "These are the women who deny their children their milk.”

He (ﷺ) continued;

«ثُم انطَلَقَ بي، فإذا أنا بالغُلمانِ يلعبونَ بين نهرين،
قلت: "من هؤلاء؟" قال: "هؤلاء ذراري المؤمنين."»

"We moved on until I saw boys playing between two rivers. I asked, "Who are these?" They replied, "These are the believers' offspring (who die before puberty)." [47]

Conclusion

Every Muslim woman should seek to attain the qualities of a good wife by obeying Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) - a path that surely leads to paradise. Also, by implementing these qualities, her marriage will be full of happiness. The best advice to every Muslim woman is to avoid the ways of the non-Muslims. Instead of building the family upon religion, the non-Muslims build it upon desire. They ignore the basic differences between men and women and treat them as equals in every regard - which has resulted in broken families and shattered ties.

In Islam, men and women have different roles. -More "public" duties are assigned to men, while women have more influence on the internal affairs of the family and the raising of children - the society's future citizens. Therefore, a Muslim woman should spend more time with her children than her husband does.

If families are not built on the foundation that Allah ordained, misery, hatred, dissension, and corruption will surely rule.

Allah will surely bless a marriage in which both the husband and wife obey Him and fulfill their obligations toward each other.

[47] Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah (no. 1986), Ibn Hibban, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ut-Targhib no. 991).

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

The following sample marriage certificate was developed by the Author as a result of numerous marriages that he performed over more than twenty years. It incorporates the Sunnah requirements for a marriage, as well as legal requirements for Muslims living in the United States or other non-Muslim countries.

Note that the spacing and column-widths have greatly been reduced to allow the certificate to fit on the paper-size of this book. One is advised to modify this as needed when making an enlarged version.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

ISLĀMIC MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

PERSONAL DATA

	Bride	Groom
Full Name		
Address and Phone Number		
Birth Place & Date		
Proof of Identity		
Father's Name		
Mother's (Maiden) Name		
Representative (*Walī*), His Address and Phone Number		(optional)

MARRIAGE DATA

Legal Marriage	State or Locality	Record Number	Date
Islāmic Marriage	Location		Date
Ṣadāq **(dowry for the bride)**			
Terms & Conditions (optional)			

This is to certify that, on this day, the bride's and the groom's parties have exchanged the *ījāb* and *qabūl* (offering and acceptance), in accordance with the Allāh's (ﷻ) Book and His Messenger Muḥammad's (ﷺ) Guidance. Finding no apparent Islāmic obstacle to prevent this marriage, I therefore pronounce the above-named groom and bride husband and wife.

This certificate carries no independent legal power; the interested parties must file for legal marriage as needed.

SIGNATURES

By signing this contract, all involved persons declare that, to the best of their knowledge, there is no Islāmically legal reason preventing this marriage. They further agree that any and all possible future disputes related to this marriage must be resolved according to the Islāmic Law.

Bride	*Wali*	Bridegroom

Witness 1, address, phone no.	Witness 2, address, phone no.	Officiant (*Imam* or Judge)

Serial Number	Recording Date

SEAL

ARABIC TERMINOLOGY

Introduction

TRANSLATING AND REFERENCING QUR'ĀN AND *ḤADĪTH*

The Qur'ān contains Allāh's exact words that cannot be precisely translated into other languages because of possible misinterpretation and limited human understanding. Therefore, we only translate the meanings as understood by trustworthy Islāmic scholars. Our Qur'ān quotes include the Arabic text, the English meaning in **«boldface»**, and a footnote specifying the location of the *āyah*(s) cited.

Similarly, our *ḥadīth* quotes include the Arabic text, the English meaning in **‹boldface›**, and a footnote briefly specifying its location in *Ḥadīth* compilations and its authenticity verification. If the *ḥadīth* contains a supplication or exaltation, we generally also include a full transliteration of its text.

USEFUL CHARTS

We present below two important charts. The first defines the transliteration symbols that we employ in this book. The second defines terms that should be uttered at the mention of Allāh or one of his righteous worshipers.

ARABIC TERMS

A number of Arabic terms are frequently used in Islāmic discussions, and seem to constitute a basic vocabulary that needs to be available to the readers of books on Islām. We attempt to provide such terms, together with their definitions, in the following glossary. We follow the glossary with a list of the Arabic weekdays and the Islāmic lunar months.

Other terms pertinent to the current book are included in the "Index" section at the end of this appendix, together with a page-reference indicating where they are defined in this book.

Glossary of Common Terms

Term	Definition
ʿAbd	Slave, servant, or worshiper. Plural: *ʿibād* or *ʿabīd*.
Adab	Good characters or manners; etiquettes. Plural: *Ādāb*.
Al-Fātiḥah	The first chapter of the Qurʾān.
ʿĀlim	A scholar or learned man in Islām.
ʿAllāmah	Exaggerated form of "*ʿālim*".
Āmīn	"O Allāh, answer my supplication."
Anṣār	Madīnah residents who supported the Prophet (ﷺ).
ʿAṣr	Afternoon. It is usually applied to the third daily obligatory prayer.
Athān	Call to the prayer.
ʿAwrah	A weakness that requires protection, or body-parts that must be covered from others.
Āyah	Miracle or sign. Also, the smallest subdivision of the Qurʾānic text — usually one sentence in length. Plural: *āyāt*.
Bidʿah	Unacceptable innovation in one of the Islāmic teachings.
Daʿwah	Call or mission.
Dīn	Religion — usually used in reference to the religion of Islām.
Dīnār	An old golden currency.
Dirham	An old currency that was made of silver or copper.
Duʿāʾ	Supplication.
Fajr	Dawn. It usually applies to the first daily obligatory prayer.
Farḍ	Obligation.
Farḍ Kifāyah	A communal obligation that must be performed by at least a few Muslims.
Farḍ ʿAyn	An obligation that must be performed by every Muslim.

Term	Definition
Fatwā	A religious verdict; plural: *fatāwā* or *fatāwī*.
Fiqh	Understanding. It is often applied to the subject of "Islāmic jurisprudence" that deals with the practical regulations in Islām.
Fitnah	Trial, test, temptation, or affliction.
Ghayb	All knowledge that is beyond the reach of human perception.
Ghusl	A ritual bath required after intercourse, ejaculation, and after a woman becomes clean from her menses.
Ḥadīth	Reports of the Prophet's (ﷺ) sayings, actions, and tacit approvals.
Ḥajj	Major pilgrimage to Makkah.
Ḥalāl	Permissible.
Ḥalqah	A circle or ring. It normally refers to a study circle.
Ḥarām	Prohibited.
Ḥasan	Good or acceptable.
Hilāl	Crescent
Ḥijāb	Cover. It usually refers to the Muslim woman's proper clothing
Hijrah	Migration — usually refers to the Prophet's migration to al-Madīnah.
ʿĪd	Festival. Plural: *aʿyād*.
Ijmāʿ	Consensus.
Ijtihād	Striving to reach a right conclusion form available evidence.
Imām	A leader or distinguished Islāmic scholar. It is often applied to the leader of prayer.
Īmān	Faith or belief.
ʿIshāʾ	Night. It is usually applied to the fifth daily obligatory prayer.
Isnād	Chain of narrators of a *ḥadīth*.
Jāhiliyyah	The era of ignorance (*jahl*) and disbelief prior to Islām.

Term	Definition
Jamāʿah	A Muslim congregation or community.
Janāzah	A funeral, or a deceased's prepared body.
Jannah	The Garden (of paradise).
Jihād	Striving or fighting for Allāh's cause.
Jinn	A creation that Allāh (ﷻ) made from fire and smoke, sometimes translated as "demon". Satan is one of the *jinn*s.
Jumuʿah	Friday. It also applies to the Friday prayer.
Kāfir	A person who practices *kufr*. Plural: "*kuffār*".
Khalīfah	Successor. It commonly refers to a Muslim ruler who succeeded the Prophet (ﷺ) in leading the Muslims. Plural: *khulafā'*.
Khamr	Alcoholic beverages.
Khilāfah	Successorship. It usually refers to the period of rule of a *khalīfah*.
Kufr	Disbelief or rejection of faith.
Khuṭbah	Speech or sermon.
Maghrib	Sunset. It is usually applied to the fourth daily obligatory prayer.
Makrūh	An act that is disapproved in Islām.
Maḥram	A man closely related to a woman and permanently prohibited from marrying her, such as her father, son, brother, uncle, nephew, father-in-law, son-in-law, suckling son, etc. Examples of non-*maḥrams*: first cousins, step brothers, and brothers-in-law.
Masjid	Place designated for *sujūd;* mosque.
Mat͟hhab	Way or approach. It usually refers to one of the four Islāmic schools of *fiqh*: the Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shāfiʿī, and Ḥanbalī.
Minbar	Steps mounted by an *imām* in a *masjid* for delivering a *khuṭbah*.
Muhājir	A migrator — a person who undertakes *hijrah*. Plural: *muhājirūn* or *muhājirīn*. It usually refers to those who migrated to Madīnah.
Mujāhid	A person who performs *jihād*. Plural: *mujāhidūn* or *mujāhidīn*.

Term	Definition
Munkar	Disapproved; rejected.
Muṣallā	A place designated for prayer.
Mushrik	A person who practices *shirk*. Plural: *mushrikūn* or *mushrikīn*.
Nafl	Extra, voluntary, or supererogatory deeds.
Qadar	Allāh's decree and measure.
Qiblah	The direction of al-Ka'bah in Makkah.
Qiyām	Literally means standing. It usually refers to the night prayer.
Qudusī	Holy. A *qudusī ḥadīth* is quoted by the Prophet (ﷺ) from Allāh.
Rak'ah	A full prayer unit, containing one *rukū'*. Plural: *rak'āt*.
Rukū'	The act of bowing in the prayer.
Ṣadaqah	Charity.
Ṣaḥābah	The Prophet's companions; singular: *ṣaḥābī*.
Ṣaḥīḥ	True or authentic.
Salaf	The early righteous pioneers and scholars of Islām.
Ṣalāh	Prayer.
Salām	Peace. It also means the greeting with peace (*as-salāmu 'alaykum*).
Sanad	Same as *isnād*.
Shahādah	Testimony; it is mostly applied to the testimony of Islām: "There is no true god but Allāh, and Muḥammad is Allāh's Messenger." Also, it is often applied to martyrdom in Allāh's (ﷻ) cause.
Shahīd	A person martyred for Allāh's cause. Feminine: *Shahīdah*.
Shām	General Middle-East area of Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, including the major cities of Jerusalem and Damascus.
Shar' or *Sharī'ah*	The Islāmic Law. "*Shar'ī*" means a legislated or permissible matter in Islām. And "*ash-Shāri'*" is the Legislator: Allāh (ﷻ).

Term	Definition
Shaykh	An elderly man. It is commonly used as a title of respect for a man with some level of Islāmic knowledge.
Shayṭān	Satan.
Shirk	Polytheism or paganism — ascribing divinity to other than Allāh, or joining partners with Him in worship.
Ṣiyām	Fasting.
Sujūd	The act of prostration in the prayer.
Sunnah	Way, guidance, or teachings. Most commonly, it refers to the Prophet's (ﷺ) way and guidance.
Sūrah	Qur'ānic chapter.
Tābiʿī	Literally, follower. It normally refers to a student of the *ṣaḥābah*. Plural: *tābiʿūn* or *tābiʿīn*.
Tafsīr	Qur'ānic commentaries and interpretations.
Takbīr	Saying, "*Allāhu Akbar* — Allāh is the greatest."
Tahlīl	Saying, "*Lā ilāha illallāh* — There is no (true) god except Allāh."
Taqlīd	Imitation, especially without knowledge.
Taqwā	Fearing and revering Allāh.
Tasbīḥ	Saying, "*Subḥān Allāh* — Exalted is Allāh."
Tashahhud	Pronouncing the *Shahādah*. It is mostly applied to the last part of the prayer that includes the *Shahādah* and *ṣalāh* upon the Prophet (ﷺ).
Tayammum	A symbolic ablution, in the absence of water, performed by wiping clean dust over the hands (to the wrists) and face.
Taslīm	Saying *salām*, especially to conclude the prayer.
Ṭawāf	Circumambulation around the Kaʿbah.
Tawḥīd	Belief that Allāh is the only Lord and God who deserves to be worshiped, and who possesses the excellent and perfect attributes.
Thikr	Extolment: remembering Allāh (ﷻ) and mentioning Him.

Term	Definition
ʿUlamāʾ	Plural of "*ʿālim*".
Ummah	Community, nation, or followers.
ʿUmrah	A minor form of pilgrimage to Makkah that may be performed at any time of the year.
Waḥy	Revelation or inspiration.
Wājib	Obligatory or required.
Witr	Odd number. The entire night prayer is sometimes called *witr* because the total number of its *rakʿāt* is odd.
Wuḍūʾ	Ritual ablution for the prayer, which includes washing the face and forearms, wiping over the head, and washing the feet.
Zakāh	Obligatory charity.
Zinā	Adultery or fornication.
Ẓuhr	Noon. It usually refers to the second daily obligatory prayer.

Arabic Weekdays and Islāmic *Hijrī* Months

	Weekday	Arabic Name	اليوم
1	Friday	*Al-Jumuʿah*	الجمعة
2	Saturday	*As-Sabt*	السبت
3	Sunday	*Al-Aḥad*	الأحد
4	Monday	*Al-Ithnayn*	الاثنين
5	Tuesday	*Ath-Thulāthāʾ*	الثلاثاء
6	Wednesday	*Al-Arbuʿāʾ*	الأربعاء
7	Thursday	*Al-Khamīs*	الخميس

	Lunar Month	الشَّهر		Lunar Month	الشَّهر
1	*Muḥarram*	مُحَرَّم	7	*Rajab*	رَجَب
2	*Ṣafar*	صَفَر	8	*Sha'bān*	شَعْبان
3	*Rabī' al-Awwal*	رَبيع الأوّل	9	*Ramaḍān*	رَمَضان
4	*Rabī' al-Ākhir*	رَبيع الآخِر	10	*Shawwāl*	شَوّال
5	*Jumāda Ūlā*	جُمادى الأولى	11	*Thul-Qa'dah*	ذو القَعْدة
6	*Jumāda Ākhirah*	جُمادى الآخِرة	12	*Thul-Ḥijjah*	ذو الحِجّة

Transliteration

Except for proper nouns, transliterated Arabic terms are *italicized*. In general, the rules of English pronunciation are applicable. The following table includes additional symbols employed in this book to help pronounce the Arabic terms.

Symbol	Stands for	English Equivalent Sounds
ā, Ā	(ا) *Alif* (long vowel a)	Mostly: Man, sad. At times: Father, hard, god.
ū, Ū	(و) *Wāw* (long vowel u)	Root, soup, flute.
ī, Ī	(ي) *Yā'* (long vowel i)	Seed, lean, piece, receive.
'	(ء) *Hamzah*	The first consonant vocal sound uttered when saying: at, it, oh.
Th, th	(ث) *Thā'*	Three, moth.
Ḥ, ḥ	(ح) *Ḥā'*	No equivalent. Produced in the lower throat, below "h". It somewhat resembles the "h" in "ahem".
Kh, kh	(خ) *Khā'*	No equivalent. Produced in the back of the mouth and top of the throat.

Symbol	Stands for	English Equivalent Sounds
Th, th	(ذ) *Thāl*	There, mother.
Ṣ, ṣ	(ص) *Ṣād*	A deeper "s" sound. Somewhat close to the "sc" in "muscle".
Ḍ, ḍ	(ض) *Ḍād*	Sounds deeper than a "d". Produced by touching the tongue to the mouth's roof, with the sides of the tongue pressed against the top molars.
Ṭ, ṭ	(ط) *Ṭah*	Similar but deeper than a "t".
Ẓ, ẓ	(ظ) *Ẓah*	A deeper *thāl*, produced by touching the backside of the tongue to the tip of the upper front teeth.
ʻ	(ع) *ʻAyn*	Produced in the bottom of the throat, underneath "ḥ".
Gh, gh	(غ) *Ghayn*	A gurgling sound produced in the back of the mouth, just above the *khā*. Similar to the "R" in some French accents.
Q, q	(ق) *Qāf*	Somewhat similar to the "c" in "coffee".

Notable Utterances

Out of love, appreciation, gratitude and other noble feelings, a Muslim is encouraged to utter the following phrases at the mention of Allāh, His messengers, or other righteous individuals.

Phrase	Mentioned with	Transliteration	Meaning
﷾	Allāh's Name	*Subḥānahū wa taʻālā*	He is exalted above weakness and indignity.
﷿	Allāh's Name	*ʻAzza wa-jal*	He is exalted and glorified.
ﷻ	Allāh's Name	*Jalla jalāluh*	Exalted is His glory.
ﷺ	Muḥammad and other prophets	*Ṣalla 'Llāhu ʻal-ayhi wa sallam*	May Allāh's peace and praise be on him.

Phrase	Mentioned with	Transliteration	Meaning
عليه السلام	Prophets and angels	*ʿAlayh is-Salām*	Peace be on him.
رضي الله عنه	A male companion	*Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhu*	May Allāh be pleased with him.
رضي الله عنها	A female companion	*Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhā*	May Allāh be pleased with her.
رضي الله عنهما	Two companions	*Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhumā*	May Allāh be pleased with them.
رضي الله عنهم	More than two companions	*Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhum*	May Allāh be pleased with them.
رحمه الله	A past scholar or righteous Muslim	*Raḥimahu 'Llāh*	May Allāh have mercy on him.

Index of Arabic Terms

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